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113.  
SECOND EDITION, WITH ADDITIONS.—PRICE ONE SHILLING.

THE  
CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
AND DISSENT.

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AN ARTICLE CORRECTED AND ENLARGED FROM THE 48th No.  
OF THE BRITISH REVIEW.

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BY JOHN CAWOOD, M.A.

OF ST. EDMUND HALL, OXFORD, AND PERPETUAL CURATE OF BEWDLEY.

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LONDON :  
PUBLISHED BY L. B. SEELEY AND SONS, 109 FLEET STREET.

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1831.



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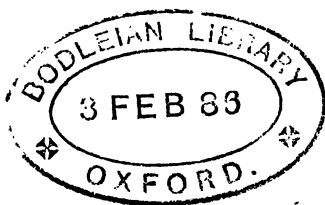
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L. B. SEELEY AND SONS,  
WESTON GREEN, THAMES DITTON,  
SURREY.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

FROM the first appearance of the following Article in the British Review, in 1825, repeated requests have been made for its separate publication. These requests have been hitherto withstood, in hope that some far abler defenders of the Church of England would arise. But though our Church, during the last five years, has been, more than ever, assailed by every form of dissent, and by every kind of infidelity, no defenders have arisen. Besides ; it has been distinctly stated to the Publishers, that, unless the Article were with consent, published separately, it would forthwith, without consent, be so published. Two thousand copies, we have just heard, have been printed, and *all* gratuitously distributed.

Nothing, therefore, remained but carefully to revise it for separate publication.—Sincerely is it hoped that there is not in its spirit any thing unchristian, in its style any thing uncourteous, in its principles any thing unscriptural, or in its reasonings any thing unsound.—Fervently, too, is it to be wished, that this little defence was such as it ought to be, or was in any degree worthy of “ the most scriptural Church in Christendom ; ”—but, such as it is, it is cordially presented to “ THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.”

AUGUST, 1830.

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## ADVERTISEMENT TO THE SECOND EDITION.

FOUR years after the Review of the second edition of “ Christian Fellowship,” a third edition, which seemed an exact reprint of the second, was published. In this third edition, “ no concessions” were made, “ no alterations” were specified, “ no withdrawals” were announced ; but, the type and size of the book were so changed, that the passages, quoted in “ the Review” from the second edition could not easily be found. Besides ; of the great multitude of quoted passages, some had been so silently altered, some so quietly withdrawn, that the reader might suspect that the pages of “ Christian Fellowship” had been grossly misquoted, and designedly falsified. On reference, however, to the second edition, all these numerous quotations will, it is believed, be found perfectly correct.

In reviewing a volume, written by a *Christian Minister*, with the attractive title of “ CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP,” it was extremely painful to find the Church of England, not only denounced as “ unscriptural, corrupt, and popish ; ” but denounced with such bombastic flippancy, with such sarcastic bitterness, with such unseemly and unfeeling jocularly. It was extremely painful to find a Christian Minister, not only publishing the most unfounded and unkind charges against the most scriptural church in Christendom ; but recommending these false charges, as essential verities

to young, inexperienced, and ingenuous dissenters, who would, probably, never see these charges refuted ! It was extremely painful to find a Christian Minister, in a tone the most arrogant, and in terms the most unchristian, but under the guise of "Christian Fellowship," exciting in the *young*, and confirming in the *old*, the bitterest enmity against their fellow Christians of the Church of England ! It was extremely painful to discover a Christian Minister, in ignorance, or in haste, misrepresenting our Scriptural Liturgy, and misquoting the Holy Scriptures !

Let it, therefore, be remembered, that, in the following pages, we are not, *unprovoked*, eagerly attacking Dissent ; but only, after long, and multiplied provocations, too tardily defending the Church of England. Let it be remembered, that the charges against our Scriptural Church are as unfounded in fact, as they are unkind in spirit ! Let it be remembered, that these unfounded and unkind charges are contained in a volume, which bears the title, not of "Sectarian Illiberality," but of "Christian Fellowship !" Let it be remembered, that the author of these charges, abundantly "confident of their truth," (p. 16.) and utterly insensible to the vituperations of episcopal bigots," "demands" and "defies the severest scrutiny" of his opponents. Let it, finally, be remembered, that the author of these unfounded, and unkind charges, not only declares "that he is TOO PROUD to ask for mercy on his mental offspring ;" but loudly boasts that "he has enough of ROMAN VIRTUE to consent to the execution of his literary child !"

"The Church of England," says he, "teaches that all who die go to heaven, WHATEVER WAS THEIR PREVIOUS CHARACTER !" (p. 15.) "The Church of England retains MANY OF THE CORRUPTIONS OF HER RELATIVE AT ROME." (p. 146.) "The Papacy, and the EPISCOPACY, WITH EVERY OTHER ECCLESIASTICAL CORRUPTION," &c. (p. 184.) "See the office of the Visitation of the Sick, than which the MASS BOOK SCARCELY CONTAINS ANY THING MORE OBJECTIONABLE !" (p. 16, note.) "We have examined these special reasons for dissent OURSELVES, and we wish others to investigate them also. We offer them to the public, and invite for them the SEVEREST SCRUTINY, BEING CONFIDENT OF THEIR TRUTH !!" (p. 16.) "In sending another of his mental offspring to be tried at the bar of criticism he is, shall he say ? TOO PROUD, to ask that it may obtain MERCY ;—the only message, which he sends with it to the scrutiny is, *Fiat Justitia !* If it be doomed to execution—however its PARENT might lament that he had given birth to a child that was unworthy to live, he has still ENOUGH OF ROMAN VIRTUE<sup>1</sup> to consent to its death !!" (vii.) "To the charge of schism preferred against us BY EPISCOPALIAN BIGOTS with such vituperation,—we are as insensible as one human being can be to the accusations of another !!" (p. 239.)

BREWLEY, FEB. 25, 1831.

<sup>1</sup> Roman virtue.—See Rom. i. 29—31. "Being proud, spiteful, boasters, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful."

THE

CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND DISSENT.

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1. *Christian Fellowship ; or the Church Member's Guide.* By J. A. James. Second Edition. Pp. x. 264.
2. *Reasons for Dissent from the Church of England.* By the late Rev. Samuel Lowell. Pp. ix. 47.

“CHRISTIAN Fellowship ; or the Church Member's Guide?” What does this Title mean? What connexion is there between the Title, and the Book? For what denomination of Christians is the Book written? An Episcopalian or a Presbyterian, a Baptist or a Wesleyan, a Swedenborgian or a Socinian, might, as well as Mr. James, write a Book with this Title. But a Papist only, who believes no church, except his own, can consistently write “*A Guide FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH.*”

“The Church Member's Guide” contains a preface, and nine chapters. The first chapter defines a “Christian Church.” In the second and third chapters, on “the nature and design of Church fellowship,” and on “the privileges of membership,” are many things peculiar to dissenters ; but the fourth chapter, on “the general duties of Church members,” might as well have been entitled “on the general duties of Christians.” This chapter has more of religion, and less of dissent, than any other portion of the book. The fifth chapter points out “the duties of Church members to their

pastors." The first part of the sixth chapter, (pp. 82—94) "on the duties of Church members to each other," is, in fact, "on the general duties of Christians," and should have been included in the fourth chapter. In the seventh chapter, "the duties of Church members to the members of other Christian societies" are discussed. "They should respect the religious opinions and practices of others;" (p. 122) "avoid religious bigotry and prejudice;" (p. 123) and "abstain from all officious controversy and underhand proselytism." (p. 124.) We sincerely regret that our author did not remember his own rules, when he wrote his first chapter; in which he "respects neither the principles nor the practices" of the Established Church; but manifests much "prejudice and bigotry," and scarcely conceals a spirit of "underhand proselytism." (p. 17). He piously teaches Baptists and Independents neither "to ridicule nor to make merry with each others' practices;" but he inconsistently takes every opportunity "to ridicule and make merry" with the Church of England (pp. 15, 16, 145, 146, 184). In treating of "the duties of Church members towards churches of their own denomination," our author is evidently irritated, and writes with exasperated feelings. On this topic he seems like a thorn-hedge on "a gusty day," in constant and violent agitation. We were really pained not only at the *fierce dissensions*, which he notices, between dissenting congregations, but at the *sarcastic bitterness*, with which he condemns them; "*Tantæne animis cœlestibus iræ?*" Our readers would not expect to find in what our author calls exclusively "The Church," and "The Church," among Independents, "*envious zealots*," "proselyting individuals to their own party;" (p. 124) "*spiritual kidnappers*," "wheedling away young converts from their home;" (p. 125) "*trumpeters of their own fame*," (p. 129) "*ministerial sycophants*," "*fawning on the affluent, and flattering the proud*," (p. 129). "It is not unusual for the pulpit to be converted into a source of

the *most disgusting adulation* ; and for a ministerial sycophant to flatter the pride of his flock." (p. 129). The eighth chapter notices "the duties of Church members in their peculiar character and station." The greater and better part of this chapter should be transferred to the fourth. The ninth and last chapter is "miscellaneous"—on "Church power," and "Church meetings ;" on "the admission and removal of members ;" "on discipline ;" "on the election of ministers ;" "on administering the Lord's Supper to the sick in private houses ;" "on the causes of schisms, which disturb THE CHURCH ;" and "on the support of ministers." This chapter is thoroughly dissenting, and altogether very curious. It contains a faithful, though not so highly coloured a likeness of dissent, as the author could easily have drawn.

Our readers may now form some idea of this work ; but they would not conceive that it contains the severest attacks on the Established Church. "The Church of England," says Mr. James, "retains many of the corruptions of her RELATIVE AT ROME" (p. 146). This is as candid and as true, as if we were to assert, that "The Independents retain many of the corruptions and hypocrisies of their FATHER AND FOUNDER, *the immoral, and infamous Robert Brown.*"<sup>1</sup> When Mr. James charges the Church of England with retaining "many corruptions" of popery ; we say to him, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour !" When he reproaches the Church of England with "her relation at Rome ;" we defy him to prove any more relationship between the Church of England and the Church of Rome, than between a legitimate monarchy and a vile usurpation,—than between a protestant and episcopal Brunswick, and a bloody and independent Cromwell !—Because the Church of Rome, in the plentitude of her "idolatrous and damnable" power, usurped authority

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<sup>1</sup> Neal's History of the Puritans, vol. i. chap. vi. pp. 375, 376.

over the Church of England; is the most Scriptural Church in Christendom to be taunted with a *relationship* to "the Mother of Harlots?"

Not satisfied with this lighter mode of sarcastic warfare, our author deliberately advances the most unjust charges against the Established Church. "The Church of England," says he, "teaches that *all, who die, go to heaven, whatever was their previous character.*" (p. 15.) To say nothing of the martyrs and reformers of our Church; to say nothing of the generations of holy churchmen, who, since the Reformation, have entered into rest; our author not only openly insults every member of the Establishment, but wantonly charges 12,000 living episcopal clergymen with utter incompetency of understanding, and searedness of conscience. For their understanding must be blunted into perfect dulness, if they do not perceive the palpable inconsistency, and their conscience must be seared into insensibility itself, if they do not feel the tremendous guilt of continuing in a church, which teaches such a horrible doctrine! We wonder how any Christian man could publish any thing so untrue and so unchristian as that "the Church of England teaches that ALL WHO DIE GO TO HEAVEN, WHATEVER WAS THEIR PREVIOUS CHARACTER." We can hardly be cool on this subject; we shall, therefore, for the present, leave it; only stating that we have said thus much to prepare our readers for that "severity of scrutiny," which our author has so confidently challenged. For he is not less complacent and confident in his charges, than he is sarcastic and severe in his language.

"We offer," says he, "*these reasons for dissent to the public, and invite for them the SEVEREST SCRUTINY, being confident of their truth.*" (p. 16.) "The Papacy, and the *Episcopacy, with every other ecclesiastical corruption.*" (p. 184.) "To the charge of schism preferred against us by *episcopalian bigots* with such vituperation, and such perseverance, we are as *insensible as one*

*human being can be to the accusations of another.*" (p. 239.)

"In sending another of his mental offspring to be tried at the bar of criticism, he is, shall he say? *too proud* to ask, that it might obtain mercy; the only message, which he sends with it, to the scrutiny is, *Fiat Justitia.*" (vii.) In this lofty tone does he announce the perfection of Independency! In these haughty terms does he proclaim the invincibility of his arguments! In this *Philistian* pomp of defiance does he challenge "the scrutiny" of his opponents! Whatever else, as a controversialist, he may want, he wants neither confidence in himself, nor contempt for his adversaries. He is "*too proud*" to ask for favour; or even to *accept* of mercy; we shall not, therefore, offend him by any offers of tenderness, nor trouble him with any apologies for "*severity*;" but while we would treat his character with respect, and his person with courtesy, we frankly tell him, that his arguments must take care of themselves. In his preface, our author sends forth his armor-bearer to proclaim his approach and his prowess; in his book, he "*ever and anon*" comes out of the camp of dissent, to defy all the armies of the Church of England. Taking up our simple sling, gathering into our scrip a "*few smooth stones*" from the clear stream of scripture and of argument, trusting more to the goodness of our cause, than to our ability in this kind of warfare; we modestly, but fearlessly meet this champion of Independency.

In our further notice of this author we shall endeavour—

I. To repel his objections against the Established Church;

II. To examine his statement of the principles of Dissent;

III. To shew the inconsistency of Dissenters with their own principles;

IV. To give a picture of Dissent from Mr. James's own pages; and lastly,



V. To make some remarks on the literary character of his work.

I. WE WOULD, IN THE FIRST PLACE, REPEL OUR AUTHOR'S OBJECTIONS AGAINST THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH.

OBJECTION I.—“ The Church of England teaches that baptism is regeneration.” (p. 15.)

We meet this assertion with a simple negative. The Church of England teaches that baptism is NOT regeneration! In her 27th article she teaches that ‘ baptism is a *sign* of regeneration or new birth, whereby, as by an *instrument*, they that receive baptism rightly are grafted into the Church.’ She teaches (Art. 25, 29.) that both the sacraments ‘ are signs of grace,’ utterly useless unless ‘ rightly received,’ and that ‘ they who receive them unworthily’ ‘ are in no wise partakers of Christ,’ but ‘ purchase to themselves damnation.’ In her Catechism she inquires—

Q. ‘ What is the outward visible *sign* or form in baptism?’

A. ‘ Water, wherein the person is baptized.

Q. ‘ What is the inward and spiritual grace?’

A. ‘ A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness: for being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are *hereby* made the children of grace.’ ‘ Hereby,’—that is, ‘ by a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness.’

Baptism, therefore, as our Church teaches, is NOT regeneration; but the *sign* of regeneration. We are willing to allow that when our author hazarded his bold assertion, he was probably ignorant both of our Articles and Catechism, and referred,—perhaps only at second-hand—to our Baptismal Service. ‘ We yield Thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased Thee to regenerate this infant with Thy Holy Spirit.’ But we claim for the formularies of our Church, what is

conceded to all other compositions, that they be compared with themselves. Let her Articles and her Catechism, in which our Church *formally* teaches, be compared with her *incidental* and *charitable* declaration in her Baptismal Service. When baptism has been *rightly* administered, and *rightly* received, our Church, in the judgment of charity, supposes that the grace of regeneration has been communicated; and, therefore, thanks God that it hath pleased Him to regenerate the baptized infant. Let our author turn and twist, dissect and distort the passage, as he please, we defy him to prove from it that "our Church teaches that baptism is regeneration." Some members of our Church, whom he deems an honour to any body of Christians (p. 13, note) strongly deny, while other members as readily admit, the inseparable connexion of baptism and regeneration. But admitting even this; still, unless cause and effect, the sign and the thing signified, be the same, our author's broad assertion is altogether unproved. For were baptism and regeneration as inseparable as the substance and its shadow, that man must be singularly gifted, who could assert that the shadow was the substance. In the passage which we have quoted from the Baptismal Service, our Church does *not* teach that baptism is regeneration. The utmost which she teaches is that God has regenerated the baptized infant, *not by baptism*, BUT BY HIS HOLY SPIRIT. And when baptism has been rightly administered, and rightly received, we challenge our author to prove that regeneration has not been effected!

OBJECTION II.—"The Church of England teaches that her bishops have the power of conferring the Holy Ghost in the ordination of ministers." (p. 15.)

This objection is founded on the form of words in "The ordering of Priests;"—"Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands."

It is evident, that these words, "Receive the Holy Ghost," are copied from the words of our Lord, when he ordained his apostles to preach the Gospel to all the world: 'As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost,' John xx. 21, 22. It is also evident, that these words cannot mean more in the "ordering of priests," than they mean in the Gospel of St. John. It is further evident, that the words in St. John do not mean "the conferring of the Holy Ghost;" because "the Holy Ghost was not *then*," but *afterwards*, "given." Finally, therefore, it is evident, that the words, 'Receive the Holy Ghost,' do not mean "the conferring of the Holy Ghost," in the ordering of priests.<sup>1</sup> What, then, is the meaning

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<sup>1</sup> Let any commentator be consulted; and every commentator will, we believe, admit that "THE GIFT of the Holy Ghost," by which the Apostles were qualified for their great work, was not bestowed at the time when our Lord said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," but at the day of Pentecost.

"Receive ye the Holy Ghost."—"The Spirit was given the Apostles in such sort in this place, that they were only sprinkled with this grace, and were not endowed with the perfect power thereof. For when the Holy Ghost appeared in fiery tongues upon them, then were they thoroughly renewed. Truly He doth not so appoint them now to preach the Gospel, that He sends them straightway to the work; but rather, as it is elsewhere, Acts i. 4. He commands them to wait. And if we weigh all things well, He does not so much furnish them with necessary gifts AT THIS TIME, as appoint and make them instruments of His Spirit AGAINST THE TIME TO COME. Acts xi. 1. &c." (Calvin, English Translation, by E. P. 1584.)

"Receive ye the Holy Ghost." "Receive ye now the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit—as an earnest of what ye shall receive more abundantly a little while hence—for your assistance and success in the ministerial work, which I commit to you." (Guyse.)

"Receive ye the Holy Ghost." "And take this as an earnest of what you shall further receive not many days hence, for thus will I shortly breathe out the miraculous influences of my Spirit upon

of these words of our Lord? The words, "*Receive ye the Holy Ghost*," retained in the ordination of a priest, signify, "Be ye ready to receive Him." "The utterance of these words was accompanied by the ceremony of our Lord's *breathing on the Apostles*,—a ceremony special, and significant of the Eternal Spirit of God, *which He would suddenly pour upon them; and for which, by this Ἀράτε πνεῦμα ἅγιον, He now prepares them*. These words, therefore, are an initial investing of the Apostles with sacred,

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*you to qualify you for this important office.*" (Doddridge.)

"*Receive ye the Holy Ghost; " "Ye are soon to receive the Holy Ghost in the fulness of His communication, whereby you will be qualified to declare the only terms on which men's sins are to be pardoned.*" (Macknight's Harmony; 4to. Vol. II. p. 226. London. 1756.)

"Ἀράτε πνεῦμα ἅγιον. Tam certi este vos accepturos Spiritum, quam sentitis hunc flatum. Act. 1. 4"—(Grotius.)

"Ἀράτε πνεῦμα ἅγιον. Sensus ergo," writes Poole in concluding his *Synopsis* on the place, "Sensus, ergo, hujus loci est, q. d. Ut Pater me mittens *unxit Spiritu Sancto*, Act. 10, 38. descendente super me in Baptismo, Luc. 3, 23. Sic et Apostoli in Inauguratione sua ad munus suum *consecrandi erunt.*" Act. 2.

But Scripture is the best commentary on Scripture. And after our Lord had spoken the words, "*Receive ye the Holy Ghost*," He said to His Apostles, "*Behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high.*" Luke xxiv. 49. Acts i. "*For ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence:—Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto Me in Jerusalem, and to the uttermost parts of the earth.*" Acts i. 4, 5, 8. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place; and suddenly they were all filled with the Holy Ghost; and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Acts ii. 1—4. It is evident, from these inspired extracts, that "*THE GIFT of the Holy Ghost*," by which the Apostles were qualified for their great work, was not conferred at the time when our Lord said, "*Receive ye the Holy Ghost*," but at the day of Pentecost.

*ghostly authority.*" [Hammond in loco; and on the Power of the Keys, 4to. pp. 3, 4. London. 1651.] "*Receive ye the Holy Ghost;*"—"The Holy Ghost, which our Lord gave his Apostles, when He sent them to preach the gospel, was a *ghostly authority*, and a *holy power* over the souls of men:—such authority and such power as neither earthly prince, nor earthly potentate can give. "*Receive ye the Holy Ghost;*" Receive the *authority and commission* of the Holy Ghost to baptize my little ones, to feed my sheep, to preach my gospel, and to 'do this in remembrance of me.'" [Hooker, vol. ii. 8vo. 427—429.]

Our readers will, we believe, conclude with us, that the Church of England does NOT teach that her bishops have the power of conferring the Holy Ghost in the ordination of ministers!

OBJECTION III.—"The Church of England teaches that her bishops have the power of conferring the Holy Ghost in the confirmation of the young." (p. 15.)

Our author could not have seen 'The Office of Confirmation' in our Prayer Book, when he made this unfounded charge against our Church. For in that 'office' the bishop only prays—"Strengthen, O Lord, these thy servants with the Holy Ghost;" "let thy Holy Spirit ever be with them;"—"and may they daily increase in thy Holy Spirit!"—Does the Church of England teach in these scriptural petitions "that her bishops have the power of conferring the Holy Ghost?" Is there no difference between a prayer for obtaining, and a power of conferring, the Holy Spirit? Mr. James, will, doubtless, be grieved that he has brought this false accusation against the Established Church, and, agreeably to the declaration in his preface (p. vii.) "will thank us for showing him his error."

OBJECTION IV.—"The Church of England teaches that her priests have power to absolve sins." (p. 15.)

The Church of England teaches that *God alone* can forgive the sins of the penitent. 'God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.' [Beginning of Morning Prayer.] 'ALMIGHTY GOD hath given power and commandment to his ministers to declare and pronounce to his people being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins; HE pardoneth and absolveth, &c.'—[Absolution.] 'Almighty and everlasting God, who dost forgive the sins of all them that are penitent.'—[Collect for Ash-Wednesday.] 'Almighty God, pour down upon us the abundance of thy mercy, forgiving us those things whereof our conscience is afraid.'—[Collect for 12th Sunday after Trinity.] These quotations, which might be multiplied a hundred-fold, abundantly prove that the Church of England teaches that GOD alone can forgive sin. But we are aware, from our author's most false and offensive note (p. 16.), that he refers to the absolution, in 'The visitation of the sick.' We transcribe the whole of the Absolution.

'Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to his Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in him; of his great mercy, forgive thee thine offences: and by his authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.'

'I absolve thee from all thy sins.' It is evident (we adopt our former mode of reasoning) that this absolution is founded on the commission of our Lord to his apostles: 'Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them.' John xx. 23. It is evident, that the words in the absolution cannot mean more than the words in the Evangelist. It is evident that the words in the Evangelist do not mean the forgiveness of sins. It is, therefore, evident that the correspondent words in the prayer of Absolution do not mean the forgiveness of sins! What, then, is the meaning of these words, 'Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted?' Doddridge gives this paraphrase: "Whosoever sins ye declare to be forgiven,

they are forgiven.”<sup>1</sup> Such too is the meaning of the words, ‘I absolve thee:’ “I *declare* thee to be absolved.” If thou truly repent thee of thy sins, and truly believe in Christ, I *declare* thee, according to the tenor of the gospel, to be absolved ‘from all thy sins.’

The internal evidence of the prayer of Absolution, and of the prayer which immediately follows it, perfectly agrees with this interpretation. The minister, in the very act of absolution, knowing that *he has not the power to forgive sins*, thus prays: ‘Our LORD JESUS CHRIST *forgive thee thine offences!*’ After the act of absolution, the minister, knowing that *he has not forgiven*, and that God *alone* can forgive sins, again prays: ‘Forasmuch as he putteth his full trust only in thy mercy, O God, *impute not unto him his former sins!*’

We now proceed to the most unjust charge in this misguiding volume.

OBJECTION V.—“The Church of England teaches that *all who die* GO TO HEAVEN, WHATEVER WAS THEIR PREVIOUS CHARACTER.” (p. 15.)

The Church of England, throughout all her Articles, Liturgy, and Homilies, teaches that none will go to heaven but the faithful and the holy! It were easy to cover our pages with quotations from the whole Prayer Book; we transcribe only one, *instar omnium*, from the Athanasian Creed: ‘They that have done good shall go into life everlasting; and they that have done evil into everlasting fire.’ But, in the ‘Burial Service’ itself, to which the author of the “Guide” refers, our Church repeatedly teaches that none but the faithful and the holy can enter the kingdom of heaven! ‘Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord.’ ‘Almighty God, with whom do live the spirits of them that *depart hence in the*

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<sup>1</sup> All sound commentators agree in this interpretation; see Gill, Guyse, Macknight, &c.

*Lord, and with whom the souls of the faithful are in joy and felicity...we beseech thee...that we...with all those that are departed in the true faith of thy holy name, may have our perfect consummation and bliss in thine eternal glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord.* 'We meekly beseech thee, O Father, to raise us from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness, that when we shall depart this life we may rest in Christ !' Is it possible that any man, who has ever read these passages in our Burial Service, can deliberately write, print, and publish, that the Church of England, in that Service, "teaches that *all who die GO TO HEAVEN, WHATEVER WAS THEIR PREVIOUS CHARACTER?*"

The particular expression to which our author alludes, 'In sure and certain hope of THE resurrection to eternal life,' refers, not to the resurrection of the person buried, but to the *general resurrection*. This is incontrovertibly confirmed by the 'office for the Burial of the dead at sea;' 'We, therefore, commit his body to the deep, to be turned into corruption, looking for the resurrection of the body, (when the sea shall give up her dead,) and the life of the world to come.' Neal, the historian of the Puritans, who, if he be, according to the *Quarterly Review*, "the most mendacious of historians;" Neal, who, if he can be trusted in nothing else, may be trusted when he is forced to admit something unfavourable to his party; Neal himself allows, that "Hope of resurrection," was altered into "Hope of THE resurrection;" to avoid the objection which our author makes.<sup>1</sup>—Our readers will, we believe, agree with us, that this charge against the Burial Service of the Church of England, is as unfounded, as it is unkind.

OBJECTION VI.—"The Church of England practises liturgical forms, which *we* deem less edifying than

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<sup>1</sup> Neal's History of the Puritans, vol. iv. chap. vi. page 341. (1661.)



extempore prayer; while... her Liturgy *abounds with vain repetitions.*" (p. 16.)

Forms of prayer were employed in the temple service of the Jews. Our Lord himself taught an incomparable *form* of prayer. St. Paul says, 'Hold fast the form of sound words.' Forms of prayer have been used in the public worship of God from the days of the apostles to the present time. The great and venerable Calvin highly approves of *forms* of public prayer: "Formulam precum, et rituum ecclesiasticorum *valde probo*, ut certa illa exstet, a qua ne pastoribus discedere in functione sua liceat.—Sic igitur statum esse catechismum oportet, statam sacramentorum administrationem, publicam item precum formulam." Calvini Epistola Protectori Angliæ, 29 Octobris 1548. "I strongly recommend that there should be a *fixed form of prayer*, and ecclesiastical rites, from which it should not be lawful for the pastors, in the discharge of their office, to depart.—There ought to be an established catechism, an established mode of administering the sacraments, and also a *public form of prayer.*" Such is the solemn and deliberate judgment of the learned and pious Calvin. "But *we*," says our author, "deem *forms* less edifying than *extempore* prayer!" (p. 16.) Were our author consistent, he would explode not only *forms of prayer*, but *forms of praise*. It would, in this case, be necessary for Independent ministers not only to make extempore prayers, but extempore verses; and then the Improvisatore would be no longer a phenomenon. Is not Dr. Watts' version of the fifty-first Psalm as much a *form* of prayer as any in our Prayer Book? We know some dissenting ministers, who, speaking contemptuously of forms of prayer, call them "*crutches to enable crippled parsons to walk.*" But if praying be walking, praise must be flying; and those dissenters, "who disdain crutches when they walk, use crutches when they fly."

"We," says Mr. James, "deem *forms* less edifying

than extempore prayer." (p. 16.) We, churchmen, on the other hand, deem forms more expedient, and more edifying for *public worship*, than extemporary addresses; and, on this point, we confidently appeal to the history of the Church, to the experience of ages, and to the common sense of mankind. We are, nevertheless, very friendly to extemporary prayer on proper occasions, and to extemporary preaching, when properly performed. But we have heard of extemporary Pray-ers, who were "outrageously long, dull, and tautologous;" and we have heard extemporary Preachers, who, having altogether neglected to study the matter, and to form the plan of their sermons, were most vehement in action, when most weak in argument, most prodigal of sound, when most defective in sense.<sup>1</sup>

But "the Liturgy abounds with *vain* repetitions!" We wish that these repetitions had been specified. We know of no repetitions in the Liturgy, except of the Lord's prayer, and the repetitions in the Litany and the Decalogue. The repetition of the Lord's prayer, as every one knows, is an accidental circumstance; and we hope that no one will irreverently call the repetition of the Lord's prayer a *vain* repetition. The repetitions in the Decalogue and Litany are all designed—wisely and piously designed,—to excite attention, to interest the affections, to promote devotion. If the repetitions in the Litany are *vain* repetitions, then not only the repetitions in the 24th, 42nd, 80th, 107th, 136th Psalms, and in many other parts of Scripture, but the awful repetitions of our agonizing Lord in Gethsemane, are vain repetitions!

We challenge the world to produce from an uninspired volume a composition so comprehensive and so

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<sup>1</sup> "QUINCE.—Snug the Joiner! you must play the Lion's part.

SNUG.—Have you the Lion's part *written*? Pray you, if it be, give it me; for I am *slow of study*.

QUINCE.—You may do it *extempore*; for it is nothing but ROARING."

MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

condensed; so chastised in feeling and so fervent in devotion; so sublime in sentiment and so simple in language, as the Litany of the Church of England. We ask any man, Is not a form of prayer, carefully composed, and diligently revised, more likely to be free from vain repetitions and incoherency than any extempore prayer? Few dissenting ministers would wish, we conceive, to see their extemporary prayers verbatim in print: but *we* should very much desire to read the prayers of *any* dissenting minister, for one month, just as he uttered them. We know that in some dissenting meetings there is more tautology in one month, than there is in the Established Church during a whole year. But on this point we will introduce a witness and an example, whose credibility, and whose competency, Mr. James will, we believe, most readily admit; we will introduce Mr. James himself.

As a *witness* Mr. James thus testifies, "Unfortunately for the interests of our prayer meetings, the brethren, who lead our devotions, are so *outrageously long*, and *dull*!" "We are often prayed into a good frame, and then *prayed out of it again*." "It is also to be regretted that the prayers are so much alike in the arrangement of the parts." (p. 66, note.) "Many ministers spend so much of their time at public meetings, and in gossiping from house to house, that their *sermons are poverty itself, or a mere repetition of the same sentiments in the same words*!!" (p. 243.) We may safely conclude that the *prayers* of such ministers are of the same character as their *sermons*,—"POVERTY ITSELF, OR A MERE REPETITION OF THE SAME SENTIMENTS IN THE SAME WORDS!!" "In some dissenting meetings, the introduction of a *new or original* conception would startle the congregation as much as the entrance of a spectre!!!" (p. 44.)

As an *example* Mr. James thus writes,—"*Mist of passion*." (p. 18.) "*Mist of passion*." (p. 133.) "*Mist of passion*." (p. 139.) "*Exemplary Example*." (p. 26.) "*Creeping reptiles*." (p. 76.) "*Sparks and scintilla*—"

tions." (p. 139.) "Irrational and senseless." (p. 53.) "Scattered and diffused." (p. 27.) "Stagnant and quiescent." (p. 241.) "Sacramental seasons under the means of grace;" that is,—Means of grace under the means of grace! (p. 32.) "Concentrates as in a focus:"—that is,—Concentrates as in a centre! (p. 27.) We had marked for transcription a *multitude of other tautologous passages* in Mr. James's book; but in compassion to our readers we will transcribe no more. But—

"Let those teach others, who themselves excel,  
And censure freely, who have written well."

ESSAY ON CRITICISM.

As Mr. James has boldly criticised, and condemned "The Liturgy," which, says an eloquent dissenter, "stands in the very first rank of *uninspired compositions*," he cannot, possibly, be displeased to see his own composition criticised.

OBJECTION VII.—"The Church of England multiplies offices in her communion beyond all scriptural precedent, until she has quite secularized her nature and appearance." (p. 16.)

The essential officers of the Church of England are 'Bishops, Priests, and Deacons;' for whose offices we can, we believe, find precedents in Scripture. Presbyters and Deacons only are the essential officers of dissenting churches. The naked question, therefore, between churchmen and dissenters on this point is, Whether Bishops and Presbyters be the same officers? We willingly allow that every Bishop is a Presbyter; but we strongly deny that every Presbyter is a Bishop. "It does not follow that all Presbyters were of the same order with Bishops, merely because Bishops are sometimes included under the name of Presbyters." This argument would prove too much; it would prove that all Presbyters were Apostles. For the Apostle John, (2 John 1. 3 John 1.) calls himself a Presbyter; and

the Apostle Peter, (1 Peter v. 1.) styles himself a *fellow-Presbyter* [συμπρεσβύτερος] of the Presbyters. But must we hence conclude that *all* Presbyters were Apostles?<sup>1</sup>

If the plan of Church Government be so plainly revealed in Scripture as Dissenters contend ; how did it happen that the plan of governing the church without Bishops was not discovered for fourteen centuries?<sup>2</sup> But that a Bishop is superior to a Presbyter appears from the memorable fact,<sup>3</sup> that for 1400 years a Christian

<sup>1</sup> Potter on Church Government, pp. 106, &c.

<sup>2</sup> The *independent*, or congregational plan of governing the Church without Bishops was discovered in the 15th century, by the infamous and turbulent bigot, Robert Brown. "This was that Robert Brown," writes Neal, "who afterwards gave name to that denomination of dissenters called BROWNISTS." Vol. I. chap. 5. p. 280. The Brownists, from their INDEPENDENT form of church government, were subsequently called INDEPENDENTS. Mr. James, sneeringly, but *untruly*, intimates that the Church of England is a daughter of the Church of Rome; and strongly charges the corruptions of unscriptural Popery on our scriptural establishment. "The Church of England," says he, "retains many of the corruptions of her relative at Rome." (146.) Though the infamous Robert Brown was *truly* the Father of Independency; yet, God forbid that *we* should charge the corruptions of a turbulent bigot on the Churches of the Independents !

<sup>3</sup> "This fact is allowed by Calvin himself."—Calvin Institut. Lib. iv. cap. 4. *De statu veteris Ecclesiæ, et ratione gubernandæ quæ in usu fuit ante Papatum.* Utile erit in iis rebus [de ordine gubernandæ ecclesiæ, et ministris] veteris ecclesiæ formam recognoscere, quæ nobis *divinæ institutionis* imaginem quandam oculis representabit. Tametsi, enim, multos Canones ediderunt illorum temporum Episcopi, quibus plus viderentur exprimere quam sacris libris expressum esset : ea tamen cautione totam suam œconomiam composuerunt ad unicam illam verbi Dei normam, ut facile videas nihil fere hac parte habuisse a verbo Dei alienum.—Quibus ergo docendi munus injunctum erat, eos nominabant Presbyteros. Illi ex suo numero in *singulis civitatibus* unum eligebant, cui specialiter dabunt titulum *Episcopi*, ne ex æqualitate, ut fieri solet,

Church could not be found without a presiding Bishop. That a Bishop is superior to a Presbyter further appears from the almost miraculous preservation of the Syrian Church in the East, and of the Valdensian Church in the West; neither of which Churches submitted themselves to Antichrist; both of which Churches are to this day Episcopal, and have been Episcopal from the days of the Apostles! That a Bishop is superior to a Presbyter still further appears from the records of ecclesiastical history, and from the writings of the primitive and apostolic Fathers. Finally—that a Bishop is superior to a Presbyter appears most clearly from the Holy Scriptures: *For this cause* left I thee in Crete that thou shouldest *set in order the things that are wanting*, [ταλείποντα, things left undone] and ORDAIN ELDERS [πρεσβυτερες] in every city as *I had appointed thee.*" (Titus i. 5.) "I besought thee still to abide at Ephesus" (where were many Presbyters) that thou charge some that they preach no other doctrine:" παραγγειλης τισὶ μὴ ἑτεροδιδασκαλῆιν: admonere quosdam

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*dissidia* nascerentur.—Verum si rem intuemur, reperiemus veteres Episcopos non aliam regendæ Ecclesiæ formam voluisse fingere ab ea quam Deus verbo suo præscripsit.

"It will be useful, in considering the manner of governing the church, to observe the form of the *ancient church*, which represents to us an image of the *Divine Institution*. For though the Bishops of those times published many canons, in which they seem to express more than is expressed in the Holy Scriptures; yet they framed their whole economy with such regard to the word of God, the only Rule, that you may easily see, they have scarcely any thing, in this respect, different from the word of God.—Those, on whom the duty of preaching was enjoined, they called Presbyters. These, in every city, chose one of their own number, to whom they specially gave the title of Bishop, lest, as it commonly happens, dissensions should arise from an equality.—But if we regard the thing itself, we shall find that the ancient Bishops were willing to frame no other Form of governing the church than that which God had prescribed in His Word."

ne doctrinam alienam a vera et pura religione Christiana, ab apostolis traditâ invehent. Schleusner. (1 Tim. i. 3. and vi. 3.) "Against a Presbyter receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses." (1 Tim. v. 19.)

If, then, to *order things left undone*; if to *ordain Presbyters in every city*; if to *charge Presbyters* to preach sound doctrine; ὑγιαίνουσιν λόγους τας τας Κυριας ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ; if to receive *accusation against presbyters*;—if all this does not prove that a Bishop is superior to Presbyters, we know not by what facts superiority can be proved, nor in what language superiority can be expressed!

With respect to temporal or occasional officers, we here only observe, that officers of this kind are as numerous in dissenting churches as in the church of England. Our author denounces not only the Episcopal, but also the Presbyterian mode of church government. (p. 5.) Our concern is with the Episcopal form of Church government; but to those, who wish to know what has been said in favour of the Presbyterian mode, we recommend the elaborate, but not unprejudiced Lectures of Campbell on Ecclesiastical History. Or, if our readers have not much dislike of oddity and quaintness, we would refer them to a volume printed in 1646, entitled "The UTTER ROUTING of the whole army of all the INDEPENDENTS and SECTARIES, with the total overthrow of their HIERARCHY, that *New Babel*, more groundless than that of the Prelates. By JOHN BASTWICK, *Captain in the Presbyterian Army, Doctor in Physick, and Phisitian in Ordinary* to all the ILL-DEPENDANTS AND SECTARIES, to sweat them with arguments twice a-year gratis, spring and fall, &c."

OBJECTION VIII.—"The Church of England by her system of patronage has taken away from the people their just right to elect their own pastors, and deprived herself of the means of preserving a faithful and holy

ministry." (p. 16.) Our limits forbid us, at present, to discuss the extensive subject of Ecclesiastical patronage, or of the means of preserving a faithful ministry in the Church. But we just remark, that bad as may be the Patronage of the Establishment, it is not so vile as in certain dissenting churches, in which our author tells us, some *Diotrephes*, or "*Lord Deacon*" is the "*Patron of the living!*" "What!" exclaims he; "What! are we obliged to look up to such a man, as our spiritual instructor, because some *profligate creature*, who has the living in his gift, chooses to introduce him to the vacant pulpit?" A "*profligate creature*" may be the patron of an episcopal living. But what *sort of creature* is he, so common, as our author writes, in dissenting churches, who, besides being "*the Patron of the Living,*" is "*the Bible of the Minister, and the Wolf of the Flock?*" With regard to the best means of preserving a *faithful ministry* in the Church, we would also remark, that our author, in his book, clearly and sorrowfully shews, that those means are not found among the Independents!

OBJECTION IX.—"The Church of England has corrupted the communion of the saints by the indiscriminate admission of persons of all characters to the Lord's table." (p. 16.)

When our author advanced this confident charge against the Established Church, he had not, we believe, even read the rubrics prefixed to her communion service.

'¶ So many as intend to be partakers of the holy Communion shall signify their names to the Curate, at least some time the day before.'

'¶ And if any of those be an open and notorious evil liver, or have done any wrong to his neighbours by word or deed, so that the congregation be thereby offended; the Curate having knowledge thereof, shall call him and advertise him, that in any wise he presume not to come to the Lord's Table, until he openly hath declared himself to have truly repented and amended his former naughty life, &c.'



*‘ ¶ The same order shall the Curate use with those betwixt whom he perceiveth malice and hatred to reign ; not suffering them to be partakers of the Lord’s Table until he know them to be reconciled, &c.’*

We shall see presently whether dissenting churches, if our author be a credible witness, be not themselves guilty of “ corrupting the communion of saints,” by wilfully admitting “ rich, but unsanctified members to the Lord’s Supper.” (pp. 252, 253.) And we ask, Do such “ unsanctified ” persons, before they partake of the Lord’s Supper, ever hear in dissenting churches, so awful a warning as they would hear, were they ‘ to presume to eat of that bread and to drink of that cup,’ at the communion of the Church of England? ‘ For as the benefit is great, if with a true penitent heart and lively faith we receive that holy sacrament; so is the danger great if we receive the same unworthily. For then we are guilty of the body and blood of Christ our Saviour, we eat and drink our own damnation, not considering the Lord’s body; we provoke Him to plague us with divers diseases and sundry kinds of death. Judge, therefore, yourselves, brethren, that ye be not judged of the Lord.’ (Exhortation at the Communion Service.)

In repelling these objections against the venerable and scriptural Establishment of the Church of England, we felt it our duty to ‘ gang warily,’ lest, in the midst of such strong provocations, we should indulge an unchristian spirit, or utter an unchristian expression: but, having crossed the more ‘ debateable’ and dangerous ground, we shall now march more at our ease.

We proceed, therefore,

## II. TO EXAMINE OUR AUTHOR’S STATEMENT OF THE PRINCIPLES OF DISSENT.

His statement is couched in the following terms.

1. “ The all-sufficiency and exclusive authority of the Scriptures as a rule of faith and practice in matters of religion.”

2. “ The consequent denial of the right of legislatures

and ecclesiastical conventions to impose any rites, ceremonies, observances, or interpretations of the word of God, upon our belief and practice."

3. "The unlimited and inalienable right of every man to expound the word of God for himself; and to worship his Maker in that place and manner which he deems to be most accordant with the directions of the Bible."

4. "The utter impropriety of any alliance or incorporation of the Church of Christ with the governments or the kingdoms of this world."

5. "The duty of every christian to oppose the authority which would attempt to fetter his conscience with obligations to religious observances not enjoined by Christ." (p. 15.)<sup>1</sup>

Two of these principles, the 1st, respecting the "all-sufficiency of Scripture;" and the 3rd, concerning "the right of every man to expound the word of God for himself," are the recognized principles of our own Church. 'Holy Scripture,' she teaches in her 6th Article, 'containeth *all things necessary to salvation*: so that *whatsoever* is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is NOT to be required of *any* man, that it should be believed as an Article of Faith.' In her first Homily she strongly urges every man to read and expound the word of God for himself. These two principles being quietly restored to the Church of England, the principles of Dissent are diminished to three; and these three naturally resolve themselves into one, namely, That all national establishments of religion whatever are unlawful. For, says our Author, "The general principles

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<sup>1</sup> Every reader of this statement of Dissenting principles might infer from it, that the Church of England not only denied the sufficiency of the Scriptures as a rule of faith and practice; but refused to tolerate the worship of non-conformists, and attempted to fetter the consciences of men!! Where is the truth, or the candour of such statements?

of Dissent lead the nonconformist to separate from all national establishments of religion whatever." (p. 15.) If, therefore, dissent be a duty, religious establishments are clearly unlawful.

This great principle of dissenters concerning religious establishments, together with their minor principles respecting the nature of a Christian Church, and of the order of Christian Deacons, we shall now proceed to examine.

1. Their principle concerning *establishments of religion*. The instance of the Jews proves the lawfulness, expediency, and advantages of a religious establishment. Their religion was established; and their establishment was national. Church and State with them were allied; were incorporated; were one. God himself was the King, and the Head both of Church and State. Were it not, therefore, an impeachment of divine wisdom, and a reflection on divine goodness, to assert the unlawfulness of *all* religious establishments? The argument derived from the Jewish establishment can be repelled only by denying, what no one acquainted with scripture will deny, that God was the supreme civil magistrate of the Jews. "God himself," writes Dr. Watts, "when he was King of the Jews, or *their Civil Ruler*, appointed one day in seven for the repose of man and beast." Again—"God was *their political Head*, and their King; and, therefore, their civil and religious concerns are intermingled in the same pages of the Bible."<sup>1</sup> "Jehovah," says Dr. Doddridge, "was not only the great object of religious regard to the Jews; but he was also *their supreme Civil Magistrate*."<sup>2</sup> Again,

The "Prophet" rapt into future times, foretold the increase and the glory of the Church: 'And Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their Queens thy nursing mothers.' Is it, then, unlawful for Christian Rulers to

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<sup>1</sup> Watts's Works, 8vo. vol. iii. pp. 338, 359.

<sup>2</sup> Doddridge's Works, 8vo. vol. ii. p. 448.

establish and 'nurse' religion in their dominions? Is it a duty to separate from all religious establishments, which have been formed by the 'nursing fathers' of the Church? Or, is dissent from the religious establishment of a pious ruler the best way to second his scriptural plans of 'nursing religion in his realms?'

Dr. John Owen,—in whom Dissenters justly glory;—who, though he were strangely infatuated with the fierce, political religion of his times, was yet an incomparable divine and most exemplary Christian:—Dr. Owen in "a sermon preached before the Long Parliament, Oct. 13, 1652," labours to prove "The power of the civil magistrate about the things of the worship of God." "Some think," says he, "if you [the rebel parliament] were well settled, you ought not, as *rulers of the nation*, to put forth *your power for the interest of Christ*. *The good Lord keep your hearts from that apprehension!* Have you ever in your affairs, received any encouragement from the promises of God? Have you in times of greatest distress been refreshed with the testimony of a good conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity you have sought the advancement of the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you believe that he ever owned '*The cause,*' [the Rebellion!] as the Head of his Church? Do not now profess you have nothing to do with Him: Had He so professed of you and your affairs, what had been your portion long since."<sup>1</sup> Again: "If it once comes to this, that you shall say, *You have nothing to do with religion as rulers of the nation*, God will quickly manifest that he hath nothing to do *with you as rulers of the nation*. Certainly it is incumbent on you to take care that the faith, which was once delivered to the saints, in all the necessary concerns of it, may be *protected, preserved, propagated* to, and among the people, over which God hath set you. If a father, as a father, is bound to do what answers this in his own family unto his children; a

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<sup>1</sup> Owen's Sermons, vol. ii. p. 96.

master as a master to his servants :—If you will justify yourselves as fathers or rulers of your country, you'll find in your accompt this to be incumbent on you."<sup>1</sup>

This argument a fortiori of Dr. Owen from the father of a family to the father of his country, is absolutely invincible. Dean Milner, in his triumphant dissertation on Church establishments, adopts the same mode of reasoning. We cannot spare room for quotations from this unanswerable production ; but we earnestly recommend its perusal to our readers.<sup>2</sup> It is remarkable, that Dr. Owen, the republican dean of Christ Church, and Dr. Milner, the loyal dean of Carlisle, should in their reasonings on ecclesiastical establishments be so nearly agreed. It is further remarkable, that Dr. Owen, who would have spurned at a Deanery from the hands of a legitimate sovereign, accepted a Deanery from the hands of a bloody usurper ! It is, finally, remarkable, that Dr. Owen, who could elaborately prove that a set of rebels, "as rulers of nations," had power in religious affairs, yet denied this very power to a lawful king !

But, after all, Is not dissent *established* ? Are not dissenting preachers and dissenting chapels *licensed* by the state ? Is not the person of the dissenting preacher guarded, and the property of a dissenting chapel preserved, by legislative enactments ? Are not the *endowments* of dissenting churches as firmly secured by the laws, as the tithes and glebes of the Church of England ? Are not dissenting congregations defended in the exercise of their religious worship, and confirmed in the enjoyment of their religious privileges, as effectually as the congregations of the Established Church ? In disputes respecting the distribution of property, the preservation of privileges, the removal of ministers and the soundness of doctrines,—do not dissenters, as confident as churchmen of justice and equity, appeal to the king,

<sup>1</sup> Owen's Sermons, vol. ii. pp. 113, 114.

<sup>2</sup> Milner's Church History, vol. ii. p. 209.

as *their temporal head*, in his high Court of Chancery, or in his Court of King's Bench? Is not dissent protected *by government*? Is not dissent *allied* with the state? Is not the king the *temporal and legal head* of dissent? In fine, Is not dissent an established religion?

"I have used the phrase '*Endowed Church*,'" says Mr. Lowell, (Reasons, p. 12) "instead of '*Established Church*;' because *the* **DISSENTING CHURCHES ARE ESTABLISHED**; for which we have the opinion of Lord Mansfield, who, in a speech in the House of Lords, observed that '*The dissenters' way of worship is not only exempted from punishment, but rendered innocent and lawful: IT IS ESTABLISHED.*'"<sup>1</sup> If, therefore, Mr. Lowell be a competent witness, and Lord Mansfield a competent Judge, dissent is an **ESTABLISHED** religion, and Mr. James *must, on his own principles, "separate" from dissent*; for he solemnly declares that "a non-conformist should **SEPARATE from all national establishments of religion** **WHATEVER!**" (Guide, p. 15).

Mr. James is hostile to an established, but friendly to an *endowed Church*: Mr. Lowell is friendly to an *established Church*, but hostile to an *endowed* one. Mr. Lowell seems to have forgotten, or not to have known, that many dissenting Churches, are *endowed*, of which "the patronage," Mr. James tells us, "is vested in the hands of trustees." (p. 214). Mr. Lowell views *endowed Churches* with horror; Mr. James wishes that more

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Mansfield delivered the same sentiments on the same case<sup>1</sup> from the bench in Westminster-hall:—"The Toleration Act has rendered the Dissenters' way of worship, not only innocent but lawful; has put it not merely under the connivance, but under the protection of the law; **HAS ESTABLISHED IT.**"—Furneaux's Letters to Blackstone. Mr. Onslow, the once incomparable Speaker of the House of Commons, asserted, "That as far as the authority of law could go in point of protection, **THE DISSENTERS WERE AS TRULY ESTABLISHED AS THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.**" Furneaux, 23, 24.

<sup>1</sup> The case of Allan Evans, Esq.

dissenting Churches were *endowed*. "Ye rich Churches," he exclaims, "in the metropolis, I appeal to your liberality in behalf of those many Churches, which are withering"—not for want of grace, but—"for want of a little of that wealth, which you could spare." (p. 135.) Again, he inquires, "Where is the favoured individual, into whose lap the bounty of providence has poured the abundance of riches? Let him become the nursing father of our poor Churches! If he should spend £2000. a year in this way, he may give £40. a year to fifty ministers! In how many church books would his name be enrolled amidst the prayers and benedictions of the saints!" (p. 135.) We hardly know the *sense* of this passage; but it *sounds* very much like popery. Further:—"Let men of increasing wealth consider it as an *incumbent duty* to consecrate no *small part* of their affluence in upholding THE CAUSE"—the cause of what? not of Christianity, but—"OF DISSENT AT HOME! The erection of chapels, the support of seminaries, the maintenance of poor ministers, the establishment of churches, should be with them an object of deep anxiety." (p. 169.) Nay:—"The benevolence of some neighbouring friends of religion may erect new places of worship, and *even elect the ministers BEFORE A CHURCH IS FORMED!*" (p. 215 note.) "ELECT THE MINISTERS BEFORE A CHURCH IS FORMED?" AND ROB "THE PEOPLE OF THEIR JUST RIGHT TO ELECT THEIR OWN MINISTERS?" (p. 16.)—How utterly inconsistent is all this with the boasted principles of non-conformity! How grievous is the inconsistency of professing Christians to every unprejudiced mind! But it seems to some persons, that what is altogether to be *condemned* in the support of the *Established Church*, is highly to be *commended* in the propagation of *Dissent*!! May we notice another inconsistency! Mr. James honestly laments the increase of "Arianism and Socinianism in dissenting churches;" (pp. 247, 257, 217) yet he strongly recommends to his dissenting readers (p. 6) "Thomas Johnson's reasons,

(price 2d.) for dissenting from the Church of England ;" "The Dissenter's Catechism, by Palmer;" and "TOOGOOD'S LETTERS ON DISSENT." Can any dissenter, *who has ever read* "Ecclesiastical Polity, in eight books, by Richard Hooker," recommend "Thomas Johnson's *twopenny* reasons for dissenting?" Can any *candid* dissenter recommend that most *mendacious* Manual, "The Dissenter's Catechism?" Can any *orthodox* dissenter recommend "The Letters of Micaiah Toogood,"—*an open blasphemer of the Son of God?*<sup>1</sup> We put it solemnly to Mr. James's own conscience, whether he can recommend to the young persons of his congregation, who are inquiring for 'the Way of Salvation,' "the Letters" of a man, WHO DENIES THE ETERNAL DIVINITY OF THE ONLY SAVIOUR?

We now proceed to examine

## 2. The principle of Dissenters respecting a *Christian Church*.

"What is a Christian Church?" (inquires our author,) "It has," (he replies,) "an enlarged, and also a more confined signification, in the word of God.—In some places it is employed to comprehend the aggregate of believers of every age and nation; hence we read of the 'general assembly and Church of the first-born,' and of the 'Church which Christ loved and purchased with His own blood.' In its more confined acceptation, it means a *congregation* of professing Christians meeting for worship in *one place*; hence we read of the Church at Rome, Colosse, Philippi, &c. These are the *only two senses* in which the word is ever employed by the sacred writers; consequently all provincial and national Churches; or in other words, to call the people of a province or nation a Church of Christ, is a most gross perversion of the term, and rendering the kingdom of Jesus more a matter of geography than of religion. The sacred writers, when speaking of the Christians of a

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<sup>1</sup> See Manning's Life of Toogood, p. 133.



whole province, *never* employ the term in the singular number, but *with great precision of language* speak of the Churches of Galatia, Syria, Macedonia, Asia, &c." (pp. 6, 7.)

Again :

" When a Church becomes too large to communicate at *one* table, and divides to eat the Lord's Supper in *two* distinct places of worship, there are *two* Churches, and no longer *one* only." (p. 9.)

This language is as offensive in its tone, as it is positive in its assertions: but overlooking its offensiveness, and noticing only its assertions, we will shew, 1st, That the word Church in scripture has more than *two* significations:—2ndly, That Mr. James, in ignorance or in haste, has misquoted or misrepresented the scriptures:—and 3rdly, That in what is called in scripture '*a Church*,' there may be several congregations. On this definition of a Christian Church, as containing only *one congregation*, the peculiar scheme of Independency is founded. If it can, then, be shewn that this scheme is unsupported by scripture, Independency will be utterly without a foundation.

Now on this point we must observe,

First, that the word Church in scripture has *more than two significations*.

It signifies, (1.) *All the people of God*, of all climes and ages, from the beginning to the end of the world: 'Christ is the head of the body, *the Church*,' Col. i. 18. See also Heb. xii. 23. Acts xxii. 28. It signifies, (2.) *The faithful Christians of some one district or province*: 'Paul and Sylvanus unto the *Church* of the *Thessalonians*,' 2 Thess. i. 1. 'Now, *ye Philippians*, know also that no *Church* communicated with me—but *ye only*,' Phil. iv. 15. It signifies, (3.) *A number of believers*, called by divine grace out of the world, and *worshipping God in one place*: '*The Church* at Jerusalem,' Acts viii. 1. It signifies, (4.) *The Christians of one family*, who were wont to meet for divine worship in a house: '*The Church* in

his house,' Rom. xvi. 5. It signifies, (5.) *The governoré of the Church*: 'Tell it to *the Church*,' Matt. xviii. 17. It signifies, (6.) *The Edifice* in which the Lord's Supper is celebrated: 'What? have ye not *houses* to eat and to drink in; but despise ye the *Church* of God?' 1 Cor. xi. 22. Our readers may now decide whether, as our author rashly asserts, the word Church, in the Scriptures, HAS NEVER MORE THAN TWO SIGNIFICATIONS.

Secondly: Our author *misquotes*, or *misrepresents* Scripture.

"Hence," says he, "we read of the Church at Rome, Colosse, Phillippi," &c. (Philippi.) We *do not* read in the New Testament of the Church at Rome; nor of the Church at Colosse; nor of the Church at Philippi! The Epistle to the *Romans* is addressed, "To *all* that be at Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints:" the Epistle to the *Philippians*, "To *all the saints* in Christ Jesus, which are at Philippi:" and the Epistle to the *Colossians*, "To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ, which are at Colosse." So much, in quoting Scripture, for "great precision of language." (James, p. 7.)

Thirdly: What in Scripture is called a Church, *contains more than one congregation*.

Was there only *one* congregation of Christians in the Church at Jerusalem? When we read so often of the breaking of bread, or the receiving of the Lord's Supper in that Church, was this bread always broken,—this Supper always received, in *one* place? Five hundred brethren at once beheld our Lord after his resurrection; 1 Cor. xv. 6. After St. Peter's sermon, 'three thousand souls *were added* to the Church,' Acts ii. 41. Soon afterwards, 'the number of the men who believed was about five thousand,' Acts iv. 4. 'The number of the disciples still *multiplied* in Jerusalem *greatly*; and a *great company* of the priests was obedient to the faith,' Acts vi. 7. And 'seest thou how many *tens of thousands* [πολλὰ μυριάδες]' perhaps forty or fifty thousands, 'of Jews there are which believe?' Acts xxi. 20.—Making every fair al-

lowance for strangers, our author will find a little difficulty in proving that these myriads of Christians at Jerusalem formed only *one* congregation, and received the Lord's Supper at *one* table! Here we might safely dismiss this question; but we have further, and, as we think, stronger proof.

In Romans xvi. 3, we read, 'Greet the Church which is in their house.' Now, we contend that unless *all* the Christians of Rome met in the house of Priscilla and Aquila, there must have been at least two congregations, and *two Churches* at Rome. Again, in 1 Cor. xvi. 19, we read, 'Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the Church which is in their house.' The First Epistle to the Corinthians was written from Ephesus, (1 Cor. xvi. 8.) And unless all the Church, or all the Christians in this city, could assemble in the house of Aquila and Priscilla, there must have been two congregations or two Churches at Ephesus. Further: in Philemon 2, we read, 'Paul and Timothy unto Philemon, our dearly beloved, and fellow-labourer, and to the Church in his house.' Philemon dwelt at Colosse;<sup>1</sup> and unless his house could contain all the Christian believers at Colosse, there must have been more than one congregation, or one Church in that city. Again: in Col. iv. 15, we read, 'Salute Nymphas and the Church which is in his house.' Nymphas must have resided at Colosse, or at Laodicea, Col. ii. 1; iv. 16; and unless all the Christians at Laodicea, or at Colosse, could worship in the house of Nymphas, there must have been at Colosse, or at Laodicea, two congregations, or two Churches. Further: In Ephesus, and in Laodicea there were, besides the family of Nymphas, and the family of Priscilla and Aquila, many Christian

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<sup>1</sup> "The Letter to Philemon, and that to the Colossians were written at the same time, and sent by the same messenger, the one to a particular inhabitant, the other to the Church of Colosse." *Paley's Horæ Paulinæ.*

families, who worshipped Christ in their houses: that is, in Ephesus, and in Laodicea were many congregations or many Churches; yet, these *many Churches* are called *one Church*: "To the Angel of *the Church* in Ephesus, and to the Angel of *the Church* in Laodicea, Write." Rev. ii. 1. iii. 14. Finally: St. Paul gives this command to the Corinthians, "Let *your women* keep silence in *the Churches*: (1 Cor. xiv. 34.) Yet he sends his epistle "To *the Church* of God at Corinth." (1 Cor. i. 2.) From this review it clearly appears (1st.) that Mr. James in *defining* a Church has *misquoted* the Scriptures; (2nd.) that the word Church has *more than two* significations; and (3rd.) that *two or more Churches* are called *one Church*. Our readers, therefore, will, we believe, with us conclude, that our Author's peculiar definition of a Church is utterly indefensible; and that *Independency, built mainly on this definition, has no support whatever from the word of God.*

We hasten to examine

3. The principles or opinions of dissenters regarding the *character and office of Deacons.*

"God instituted, (says our author,) but two kinds of *permanent* officers in His Church, Bishops and Deacons: the former to attend to its spiritual affairs, and the latter to direct its temporal concerns." (p. 10.)

"The Deacon is appointed to receive and distribute the funds of the Church, especially those which are raised for the relief of the poor." (p. 11.)

"The table of the poor is the Deacon's appropriate and exclusive duty." (p. 148.)

"But the Church of England, which retains many of the *corruptions of her relation at Rome*, has imitated her in the total alteration of this office." (p. 146.)

Not content with this unchristian condemnation, he proceeds to ridicule:—

"In that communion the Deacon is *half* priest,—*half* layman,—and does not altogether put off the *laic*, nor put on the *cleric* character, till his second ordination." (p. 146.)

We know not whence Dissent has borrowed her *corruptions*, nor what *relation* she has imitated in the total alteration of the office of dissenting Deacons; but Mr. James has told the world that “the Deacon of some dissenting Churches is *the Patron of the Living, the Bible of the Minister, and the Wolf of the Flock!!!*” (p. 146.)

The Deacons of Dissent, and the Deacons of the Church of England, whom our author so merrily ridicules, are indeed totally distinct; but not more distinct than the seven holy men mentioned in Acts vi. and the Deacons described by St. Paul in 1 Tim. iii. 8.

The seven holy men mentioned in Acts vi. are never called Deacons; they were appointed, on a singular occasion, to an extraordinary office; their office was altogether worldly and temporary. But the persons described by St. Paul are repeatedly called Deacons; they are probationers for a higher degree; they were appointed as ordinary and permanent officers of the Church. And as the qualifications of Deacons are nearly the same as the qualifications of Bishops, the fair inference is, that their office is of the same kind,—that is, a spiritual office. Let any one read, without bias, the accounts as they stand in the Scriptures, and he will be astonished that the temporary office of the seven holy men in the Church of Jerusalem, should ever have been confounded with the permanent office of the Deacons of St. Paul!<sup>1</sup>

We have now shewn that an Established Religion is lawful, expedient, and scriptural;—that the Deacons of dissenting Churches are not the Deacons described by the Apostle;—and that the peculiar scheme of Church government, called Independency, has no foundation in the Holy Scriptures.

But we come now to shew,

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<sup>1</sup> See Hey's Tracts, pp. 591, &c.

### III. THE INCONSISTENCY OF DISSENTERS WITH THEIR OWN PRINCIPLES.

They maintain, according to our author, that Christ has revealed in the New Testament a clear and accurate scheme of Church government:—a scheme, which they scrupulously maintain, but which Churchmen “grossly” violate.

“Christ has laid down *rules for the government of his Church.*” (p. 189.)

“In the *whole business of Church government*;—we are to acknowledge the authority of Christ;—*in all things* we are to be guided by *the law of Jesus laid down in his word.*” (p. 183.—see pp. 4, 5, 10, 17, 184, &c. &c.)

Such are the avowed principles of Dissenters; but,

1. Their practice is inconsistent with their principles *in the choice of their ministers.*

*Every Christian has a right to choose his own minister.* (p. 214.) But our author tells us that the minister may be appointed before the Church is formed! (p. 215.) He further tells us that in the election of ministers sometimes “only trustees vote;”—sometimes “only male subscribers;”—sometimes “female subscribers:”—and sometimes “seat-holders generally, including *Arians and Socinians!*” Ministers are to be invited to vacant Churches, to be tried and compared by the congregation before they are chosen. (pp. 214—220, 223—234.)

Now we ask—Are *all* these modes,—or is *any one* of these modes of electing ministers, revealed in the New Testament? In what part of the New Testament is it revealed that “trustees,” or “members,” or “male subscribers,” or “female subscribers,” or “seat-holders,” or “Arians and Socinians,” should vote in the election of a Christian pastor? Where is it written in the New Testament that ministers are to be “invited,” “tried,” and compared; and after “three months’” probation and comparison, to be elected or rejected? Our author candidly confesses,—but the confession is at

the expence of consistency,—“that no case occurs in the inspired History, where it is mentioned that a Church elected its own pastor!” (p. 12.)

But a case *does* occur in that History of an apostle ordaining a bishop without any election, and then commanding that bishop, as in our own Church, to ordain faithful men for the work of the ministry.

“It not unfrequently happens that members secede, because a pastor is chosen, whose election they cannot approve.” (p. 211.)

To be consistent with their own principle, *all the minority* ought to secede; except they can acknowledge the minister against whom they have been voting, as the minister of their choice! On this principle, Churches may divide and subdivide, and divide and subdivide again, until some happy individual becomes a Church, and prays, and preaches, and administers the Lord’s Supper—to himself! Thus it happens that erroneous principles lead to conclusions not only inconsistent, but absurd and impracticable.

2. Their practice is inconsistent with their principles in regard to the officers of their Churches.

“The deacon is to direct the temporal affairs of the Church.” (p. 10.)

“But by the *usages* of our Churches many things have been added to the duties of the office *beyond its original design*.” (p. 147.)

“Deacons, though their office be altogether of a temporal nature, will be considered” by the minister, “as a privy council in *spiritual* government.” (p. 152.)

Where, we ask, is the scriptural warrant for “*adding* to the paramount duty of deacons?” (p. 148.) Where is the consistency of converting a *temporal* officer into a privy *spiritual* counsellor? And how can dissenters profess to be in *all* things, respecting Church government, “guided by the law of Jesus as laid down in his word,” and yet make “*additions* to the office of deacons, *beyond its original design*?”

Our author condemns the Church of England "for multiplying offices in her communion beyond scriptural precedent," (p. 16.) but in his own book he mentions the following officers of dissenting Churches: "lord deacons," (p. 147) and "leading members," (p. 250) "committees," and "chairmen," (pp. 147, 185) "presidents," and "privy-counsellors," (pp. 186, 152) "trustees," and "treasurers," (pp. 214, 220, 150). Where, we ask again, are the "scriptural precedents" for these officers of dissenting Churches? How dim-sighted is prejudice;—how inconsistent is error!

3. Their practice is inconsistent with their principles *in respect to the admission of members.*

"Members," says our author, "are sometimes admitted after examination before the whole body of the brethren;"—sometimes after a private examination by a deputation of the Church; and sometimes after the "written statements" of the candidate have been publicly read and discussed in Church meetings. (pp. 191--193.) Where, in the New Testament, is a candidate for Church communion required to be examined before the "whole body of the brethren;" or by a "deputation" of the Church? Where is he enjoined by Holy Scripture "to write a statement," to be read in a Church meeting? We answer in the words of our author,—*"No instance can be brought from the New Testament."* (p. 8.)

"Scripture is *silent* on the subject." (p. 192.)

"No case in the New Testament?" "Scripture *silent* on the subject?" And yet we are authoritatively told, "that *every thing*" in dissenting Churches is done after "the law of Jesus laid down in his word." (p. 183.) "How inconsistent is error; how dim-sighted is prejudice!"

4. Their practice is inconsistent with their principles *with reference to the reception of communicants at the table of the Lord.*

While our author strongly condemns the Church of



England for indiscriminately receiving persons of all characters to the Lord's table, (p. 16) he strongly insinuates that the Lord's table among dissenters is perfectly undefiled. But in other parts of his volume we are told, that "Gossips and tattlers disturb our Churches." (p. 112.) "Some *members* are card players, and Sunday travellers." (pp. 64, 66.) "*Discipline is relaxed to admit wealthy members of unsanctified dispositions.*" (p. 252.) "Some (*members*) there are, who betray their Master for a less sum, than that which Judas set upon his blood!" (p. 49.)

And yet these "gossips and tattlers;" these "card players and Sunday travellers;" these "wealthy unsanctified persons;" and these "betrayers of Christ Jesus;"—are *all* indiscriminately admitted, in dissenting Churches, to the table of the Lord!! Nay, are not "some *immoral*" ministers, "attaching a party to themselves," retained in their Churches? (pp. 245, 246.) And do not those *immoral* ministers administer and receive the Lord's Supper?—Where, then, we ask, is the vaunted purity of Christian communion in dissenting Churches? Where is the consistency of accusing the Church of England of corrupting the communion of the saints? 'And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye?' Luke vi. 41, 42.

On the whole; the practice of dissenters is at variance with their avowed principles,—in the election of ministers; in the admission of members; in the duties of Church officers; and in the reception of communicants at the table of the Lord!—Where, then, we inquire, is the scheme of Church government so clearly revealed in the New Testament? Where is this scheme so accurately observed by dissenters? To what denomination of non-conformists must we look for a correct exemplifi-

cation of this scheme? To the "Arians, or to the Socinians?" To the Presbyterians, or to the Independents? To the Wesleyans, or to the Baptists? If to the Baptists; to which division? To the general, or to the particular; to those of open, or to those of close communion?

Our author seems, indeed, aware of the inconsistency between the practice and the principles of dissenters in reference to Church government; and, in the course of his various discussions, is often forced to forsake his dissenting positions.

"It might be presumed *a priori* that a matter of such moment, (as Church government,) would not be left unsettled."—"It is true that we shall search the New Testament *in vain* for either precedent or practice, which will support *all the usages* of our Churches, any otherwise than as these usages are deduced from the spirit and bearings of *general principles*." (p. 5). Hence he endeavours to support "*these usages*" by arguments *a priori*; (p. 5.) by "general principles;" by "reason;" by "analogy;" by "expediency;" and by the "principles of Independency."—(pp. 5, 216, 217, 241.) But here he abandons the great principles of dissent: and, with the exception of "the principles of Independency," of which we never heard before, he writes as a Churchman would write on *indifferent* things; only he writes without those admirable guards, which the Churchman finds in the Articles of his Church 'that *nothing* be ordained contrary to God's word;' (Art. xx.) 'and that *all things* he done to edifying.' (Art. xxxvi.) For want of these two guards, how often have dissenting ministers turned aside to vain jangling, while their unhappy Churches have sunk into the cold swamp of Socinianism.

We now proceed to the most interesting part of our subject; and request the attention of our readers,—

#### IV. TO A PICTURE OF DISSENT DELINEATED IN MR. JAMES'S OWN PAGES.

##### 1. *Of the Election of dissenting ministers.*

"When a Minister is removed,—the choice of a

successor *always* brings on a *crisis* in the history of the [vacant] Church "...." *No event that could happen can place the interests of the society in greater peril!!*" (Guide, p. 223, 224.) "The feeling of *too many of our members* may be thus summarily expressed, 'I will have my way;'<sup>1</sup>—such a spirit is the source of all the evils, to which our Churches are *ever* exposed; and of which, it must be confessed, they are but *too frequently the miserable victims!*" (p. 233.) "Distraction and division of Churches have frequently resulted from the election of Ministers." (p. 223.) At this "perilous crisis," (p. 224.) "*secret canvassing,*" (p. 228.) "*cabals, intrigues,*" (p. 229.) and the most *disgusting exercise* of the most *disgusting tyranny*" between opposing "parties, take place." (p. 231.) "If the two parties cannot unite in peace, let them at least *separate* in peace. Alas! that this should *so rarely be the case.*" (p. 233.) "Divisions in our churches produce *incalculable mischief*: since they not only prevent the *growth* of religion, but *impair and destroy it.*" (p. 240.) "Sometimes the *majority yields to the minority!*" (p. 230.) "In some cases a division is necessary;" (p. 233.) "and the minority separates;" and then "how much *ill will* and *antichristian feeling*—what *envies*, and *jealousies*, and *evil speakings commence and continue!*" (p. 232.) "We have been accused of *wrangling* about a Teacher of Religion, till we have lost our religion in the *affray*; and the state of *many* of our congregations proves that the charge is not altogether *without foundation.*" (p. 223.)

## 2. Of Ministers of Dissenting Churches.

"Churches tempt *students* to leave their colleges before the term of their education has been completed." (p. 243.) "A defective education not unfrequently prepares a minister to be the cause of much uneasiness in a Christian Church." (p. 241.) "For want of ministerial diligence the sermons of some ministers are *poverty itself*, a mere *repetition of the same sentiments in the same words.*" (p. 243.) "*I believe one half of our church quar-*

*rels originate in lazy loitering ministers!*" (p. 244.) "Some ministers plunge themselves in debt, or involve themselves in politics, or marry unsuitable persons;" (p. 244.) "others are of bad temper"—"so that a fire of contention is soon kindled, and the whole church is enveloped in the flames!" (pp. 244, 245.) "Others are immoral!!" "Yet attaching to themselves a party" are retained in the church!! (p. 245.) "Others are tenacious of their situations" (p. 246.) "beyond the period of seven years." (p. 248.) "After all I am constrained to confess that the darkness which rests upon the mind of the church member is the result of that cloudiness, which envelops the mind of the pastor: if there is ignorance in the pew, it is because there is so little knowledge in the pulpit. When the preacher dwells on nothing but a few common place topics of an experimental or consolatory nature; while all the varied and sublime parts of revealed truth are neglected for one eternal round of beaten subjects; when a text is selected from time to time, which requires no study to understand, no ability to expound; when nothing is heard from one Sabbath to another but the same sentiments in the same words, until the introduction of a new or original conception would startle the congregation almost as much as the entrance of a spectre; who can wonder if, under such circumstances, the congregation should grow tired of their preacher; or if such drowsy tinkling should 'lull the fold,' till with their shepherd they sink to the slumbers of indifference, amidst the thickening gloom of religious ignorance." (pp. 43, 44.)

### 3. *Of Deacons of Dissenting Churches.*

"I have known instances, where through first the neglect and then the refusal (of deacons) to render an account" of money; "the affairs of religious societies have been carried into chancery, and *strife, ill-will, confusion, and every evil work* have sprung up in the church!" (p. 150.) Some "deacons make kindness and assistance a cloak for their own tyranny; or a silken web to wind

round the *fetters*, they are preparing for the *slavery of their pastor!*" (p. 153.) For "what is the deacon of some of our *dissenting* communities?—the *patron of the living*, the *bible of the minister*, and the *wolf of the flock!* an individual, who, thrusting himself into the *seat of government*, attempts to *lord* it over God's heritage, by dictating alike to the pastor and the members;—who thinks that in virtue of his office his opinion is *to be law in all matters* of Church government, whether *temporal* or *spiritual*; who upon the least symptom of opposition to his will, frowns like a tyrant upon the spirit of *rising rebellion among his slaves!!* Such men there have been, whose spirit of domination in the church has produced a kind of *diaconophobia* in the minds of many ministers, who have suffered most woefully *from their bite*, and have been led to resolve to do without them altogether, rather than be *worried* any more!! Hence it is, that in some cases the *unscriptural* plan of committees has been resorted to, that the tyranny of *Lord Deacons* might be avoided!" (pp. 146, 147.)

#### 4. *Of Members of Dissenting Churches.*

"They are frequently *hasty* in the choice of a pastor;" (p. 247.) and "soon grew *tired* of the man whom they choose (chose) at first with every demonstration of sincere and strong regard. They seldom approve a minister beyond a period of *seven years*; and are so *uniform* in the term of their satisfaction as to make their neighbours look out for a change, when that term is about to expire." (p. 248.) "It is to the deep, and wide, and eternal reproach of some churches that though possessed of ability, they dole out but a wretched pittance from their affluence, leaving their ministers to make up the deficiency by a school, and then with insulting cruelty complain that their sermons are *very meagre*, and have a *great sameness*." "A congregation, allowing their minister *ten pounds* a year, and who left him to the toils of a school to supply the deficiency, sent a deputation to complain that his sermons were poor. 'Very true,' replied the

good man, 'my sermons are not so good as they should be, but I dare say they are as good as any *ten pound* preacher in the kingdom delivers.'"<sup>1</sup> (p. 78.) "They love their minister dearly with their lips, but hate him as cordially with their pockets." "They treat him as they would wild beasts, which are tamed into submission by hunger, and *keep him humble by keeping him poor!* It is curious to hear how some persons will entreat of God to bless their minister in his basket, and his store, while, alas! poor man, they *have taken care* that his *basket* should be *empty*, and his *store* *nothingness itself!*" (pp. 78, 79.) "They have seen him struggling with the cares of an increasing family, and marked the cloud of gloom as it thickened and settled on his brow: they knew his wants, and yet, though able to double his salary, and dissipate every anxious thought, they have refused to advance his stipend, and have *robbed him of his comfort*, either to *gratify their avarice*, or to *indulge their sensuality!*" (p. 48.)

"In many of our Churches the pastor is depressed far below his level. He has *no official* distinction or authority. He may *flatter* like a sycophant, *beg* like a servant, or *woo* like a lover! but he is not permitted to enjoin like a ruler. His opinion is received with no deference, his person is treated with no respect, and in presence of *some of his lay tyrants* he is only permitted to *peep and mutter from the dust!*" (p. 60.) He is exposed to their "whispers, inuendoes, significant nods, and slanderous silence." (p. 76.) "They treat him as if he could feel nothing but blows; they are rude, uncourteous, churlish." (p. 62.) They send him "anonymous and insulting letters; young, impertinent, and dictatorial persons

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<sup>1</sup> I happened once to ask a dissenting minister to what denomination he belonged; he replied that he was an *Independent*;—"so called," he added, "though we are the **MOST DEPENDENT** creatures on the face of the earth."—Southey's "Progress and Prospects of Society." Vol. ii. p. 134.

wait upon him ; and those who have nothing to recommend them but their impudence and officiousness school him in an oburgatory strain." (p. 249, 250.)—Some are "petulant and irascible. I would have a text of Scripture written upon a label, and tied upon the foreheads of such persons ; and it should be this, *Beware of dogs!*" (p. 99, 100.) "Few circumstances tend more to disturb the harmony of our churches than a gossiping and tattling (gossiping and tattling) disposition." (p. 112.) "And many disguise their backbiting disposition in *affected lamentation*." (p. 115.) "Third persons, whose ears are ever open to catch reports should be avoided as the plague ; they are mischief-makers, and quarrel-mongers ; and the very *pests of our Churches!*" (p. 102.) "A little inclemency of weather, or the slightest indisposition of body is sure to render the seats of some of our members vacant."—"Tell it not in Gath ! Publish it not in the streets of Askelon ! *many professors do not scruple to devote a part of the sabbath to travelling!*" (p. 64.) And "the pastor" going on week-days "to the house of God," meets some of his "members hastening to parties of pleasure, or sees them in circles of gaiety, possibly—at cards !!" (p. 66.) "How can that professing Christian enjoy the roasted joint, when he remembers that his servant has been profaning the Lord's day to prepare the feast ? He comes perhaps from the sacramental table, and in the hearing of his domestics talks of the precious season he has experienced, while *they* revile, as disgusting cant, the religious conversation of the man, who *robs their souls to pamper his appetite!*" (p. 160.) "It is *dreadful*, but not *uncommon*, for children to employ themselves in contrasting the appearance which their parents make *at the Lord's table*, and *at their own* ; *in the house of God*, and *at home*." (p. 157.) "Discipline is relaxed to admit wealthy members of unsanctified dispositions." (pp. 252, 253.) "*Few* are the Churches, whose records will not furnish in sentences of suspension and excommunica-

tion, the melancholy memorials of commercial disruption." (p. 178.) "Some (members) betray their Master for a less sum than that which Judas set upon his blood; and for a tithe of thirty pieces of silver will be guilty of an action, which, they must know at the time, will provoke the severest invective, and bitterest sarcasm against all religion." (p. 49.) "But after all, the grand source of ecclesiastical distractions is, the very feeble operation of Christian principles on the hearts of Church members." (p. 257.) "Alas! alas! how many of our churches present at this moment the sad spectacle of a house divided against itself!" (p. 240.)

#### 5. *Of Meetings of Dissenting Churches.*

"Church meetings have exhibited scenes of confusion little recommendatory of the democratic form of church government," (p. 185.) "Instead of seeking the good of the whole, the feeling of too many of our members is, '*I will have my way.*' Such a spirit is the source of all the evils to which our churches are ever exposed, and of which, it must be confessed, they are but too frequently THE MISERABLE VICTIMS!" "What can be more indecorous than to see a stripling standing up at a church meeting, and with confidence and flippancy opposing his views to those of a disciple old enough to be his grandfather?" (p. 96.)—when church meetings become "a court of common pleas;" (p. 109.)—and it is necessary "to bind over to keep the peace?" (p. 256.)

Individual members of property, carrying the spirit of the world into the church, "endeavour to subjugate both the minister and the people." (p. 250.) "When they are resisted, they breathe out threats of giving up all interest in church affairs; at which the terrified and servile society and their resistance, consolidate the power of their tyrant, (tyrants?) and rivet the fetters of slavery upon their own necks. At length, however, a rival power springs up;—opposition commences;—the church is divided into factions; the minister becomes involved in the dispute; distraction follows;—and division fin-



ishes the scene! Lamentable state of things! *Would God it RARELY occurred!!*" (p. 251.)

#### 6. *Of False Doctrines of Dissenting Churches.*

"*Creeping reptiles infest our churches, and perpetually insinuate that their ministers do not preach the Gospel; because they have dared to enforce the moral law as the rule of a believer's conduct.*" (p. 76.) "*This antinomian spirit has become the pest of many churches.*" (p. 76.) "*Oftentimes has this elfish spirit [of antinomianism] risen up to be the tormentor of the father that begat him; but if quiet till his head was beneath the clods of the valley, he [the elfish spirit] has possessed and convulsed the church during the time of his successor.*" (p. 255.) "*But the chief source of Antinomianism is THE PULPIT!!*" (p. 256.)

"Miserable efforts are made by some professing Christians to be thought people of taste and fashion; but when a worldly temper has crept into the circle of a christian church, piety retires before it, and the *spirit of error* soon enters to take possession of the *desolate heritage.*" (p. 158.) "Extreme cases may occur in which a *majority* of the people wish to introduce HETERODOX sentiments." (p. 247.) "I have known instances in which ministers of great eminence and influence have suffered individuals (of erroneous sentiments) *to remain in communion* for the sake of peace; and have trusted to their own authority to prevent the mischief from spreading. This, however, is chaining *the fiend*, not casting him out; and leaving him to burst his fetters, when the hand which held him in vassalage is paralyzed by death; and leaving him to *waste and devour* the church under a younger or inferior minister." (p. 257.) "In this way, SUCH NUMBERS of once orthodox places, have fallen into the possession of those who *oppose the truth as it is in Jesus.*" "*Many pulpits now devoted to the propagation of UNITARIAN DOCTRINE,*" were "*once the fountains of purer principles!*" (p. 217.)

#### 7. *Of the conduct of Dissenting churches toward one another.*

“ It does not unfrequently happen when two or more Churches of the *same* denomination exist in a town, a *most unhappy, unscriptural, disgraceful temper is manifested towards each other. ALL the feelings of envy, jealousy, and ill-will, are cherished and displayed with as much*” (as,) “ *or more bitterness than TWO RIVAL TRADESMEN WOULD EXHIBIT IN THE MOST DETERMINED OPPOSITION OF INTERESTS ! This is peculiarly the case, where two Churches have been formed by a SCHISM<sup>1</sup> out of one. Oftentimes the FEUD has been perpetuated through one generation, and has been BEQUEATHED to the generation following !!!*” (p. 126.) “ I have known cases in which both the minister and his flock have *refused even the civilities of ordinary intercourse* to those who have left their Church to associate with *another !*”<sup>2</sup> (p. 130.)

Earnestly recommending our readers to *study* this “ PICTURE OF DISSENT,” delineated in the pages of Mr. James, without making a single remark upon it, we hasten, in the last place,

#### V. TO MAKE SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE LITERARY CHARACTER OF HIS WORK.

1. *The spirit or tone of the whole work is pompous and dogmatical.*—“ We offer,” says he, “ these reasons of Dissent to the public, and invite for them *the severest scrutiny, being confident of their truth.*” “ *We have examined them ourselves, and wish others to investigate them also ; being assured that the more they are exam-*

<sup>1</sup> It is *schism*, then, to “ form two dissenting congregations out of one !” but it is *not schism* to form a dissenting congregation out of the Church of England !

<sup>2</sup> Our Author has collected all the faults which he can find or fancy in the *Formularies* of the Establishment, and has exhibited them to the world as a *Picture of our Church*. (Guide, 16, &c.) He cannot, therefore, complain, if we, *from his own pages*, produce a *Picture of Dissent*. His picture of the Church is, indeed a *deformed caricature* ; but ours of Dissent, if *his own statements are correct*, is an *accurate likeness*.

ined, the more they will be approved." (p. 16.) Again:—"In sending another of his mental offspring to be tried at the bar of criticism, he is, shall he say? *too proud* to ask that it might obtain mercy; for the *critic's chair* should not be a *throne of grace*, but a *bench of justice*; the *only* message which he sends with it to the scrutiny is, 'Fiat Justitia.' If it be doomed to *execution*, and shall be found deserving of so untimely and dishonourable a grave, (death?) however its parent might lament, that he had given birth to a child that was unworthy to live, he has still enough of *Roman virtue* to consent to its death!" (Preface vii.) This passage is as devoid of taste, as it is of humility; it is as incorrect in language, as it is revolting in sentiment. Whenever did a follower of the lowly Jesus boast of his "*Roman virtue*?" (Rom. i. 29—32.) What has a Christian Minister to do with "*pride*"? Whoever sent such a *haughty message* to the bar of criticism? When was "*The Throne of Grace*,"—"The Throne of Glory,"—and "*The Throne of God*,"—so irreverently placed between "*The Critic's Chair*," and "*A Bench of Justice*?" We denounce this use of the sublime and scriptural expression "*The Throne of Grace*," as both flippant and profane.

Our author, we are sure, would shrink, as much as ourselves, from the *profane* use of scriptural language; but on perusing this passage, its profaneness struck and grieved us; and it will, we believe, strike and grieve our readers. Our author is "*too proud*" to receive a favour, or "*to ask for mercy*" from the Critics. He invites and challenges "*the severest scrutiny*." "*Confident*" of the triumphant merits of his book, and fully "*assured*" of the invincibility of its arguments, "*the only message which he sends with it is, 'Fiat Justitia.'*"

How different was the spirit of Samuel Johnson, when he wrote the unrivalled preface to his English Dictionary! "*In this work, when it shall be found that much is omitted, let it not be forgotten, that much likewise is performed; and though no book was ever spared out of*

tenderness to the author ; and the world is little solicitous to know whence proceed the faults of that which it condemns ; yet, it may gratify curiosity to inform it, that the English Dictionary was written, with little assistance of the learned, and without any patronage of the great ; not in the soft obscurities of retirement, or under the shelter of academic bowers ; but amidst inconvenience and distraction, in sickness and in sorrow ! I have protracted my work, till most of those whom I wished to please have sunk into the grave, and success and miscarriage are empty sounds. I, therefore, dismiss it with frigid tranquillity, having little to fear or hope, from censure or praise !"—(Preface to English Dictionary.)

"To the charge of schism," says our author, "preferred against us by *Episcopalian bigots*, with such vituperation, we are as insensible as one human being can be to the accusations of another." (p. 239.) "Papacy, Episcopacy, and *other corruptions*." (p. 184.) "The Church of England retains many of the corruptions of *her relation at Rome*." (p. 146.) These passages, which might be abundantly multiplied, are not only pompous and dogmatical, but uncandid and unchristian. "Rejecting, as irrational and unscriptural, the senseless doctrines of passive obedience, and non-resistance ; —doctrines which none but *knaves* ever preached, none but *fools* ever believed, none but slaves ever obeyed." (p. 53.) On our table now lies an elaborate treatise, written by the incomparably *learned* and *pious* Archbishop Usher, and edited after his death, with a preface, by the very profound and accurate casuist, Bishop Sanderson, "ON PASSIVE OBEDIENCE, AND NON-RESISTANCE." But USHER and SANDERSON, it seems, were only "KNAVES" and "FOOLS!!"

In a quotation, which our author makes from Dr. Owen on Church Government, a dignitary of our Church is contemptuously called "a meteor of an Arch-deacon." (Guide, p. 145). If it were as *Christian* as it is *easy* to call names, Dr. Owen might be called a

meteor of an Arch-chaplain to an usurper. As chaplain, he preached "a sermon to the [Rebel] Parliament, October 24, 1651," "a solemn day of thanksgiving, for the destruction of the Scots' army at Worcester, with sundry *other mercies*!!" (Owen's Sermons, Vol. ii. title page.) Among the "sundry other mercies," for which this Arch-chaplain of Cromwell gave God thanks, was not only the slaughter of 5000 loyal Scots on the field of battle; but the subsequent sale and transportation of 7000 prisoners of war into perpetual slavery!! (Macaulay's History of England, Vol. v. p. 72.)

"Dr. Goodwin," another meteor chaplain of Cromwell, "as if by express revelation, assured the deeply-troubled Usurper, a few hours before he died, that he would recover from his sickness! But as soon as the guilty tyrant had expired, this chaplain fell into a rage, and scolded the Almighty for deceiving him." (Burnet's Own Times.)

"Mr. Sterry," a third meteor chaplain of Cromwell, "thus prayed for the new Protector; 'Make him, O LORD! the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person!!' Dr. Owen, and Dr. Goodwin were present at this blasphemous impiety." (Burnet's Own Times, Anno 1659.)

The Rev. Jeremiah White was another meteor chaplain of Cromwell. This religious buffoon was retained in the Protector's family, to make prayers, or to make sport, as it suited the wiles, or the whims, of the crafty Usurper. But Jeremiah had fixed his affections on the Lady Frances, the fourth daughter of Cromwell; nor had the Lady Frances repelled his ardent suit. Cromwell soon learnt from his spies, (without spies Cromwell could not govern his own house!) the profane intentions of his pious chaplain. The love-struck man one day entered the apartment of the Lady Frances; Cromwell, guided by his spies, quickly followed, and discovered the unfortunate Jerry on his knees, kissing her Ladyship's hand! 'What!' cries the Tyrant—'What is

the meaning of this posture before my daughter Frances?' The pious chaplain, with deep dissimulation in his heart, and a ready falsehood on his tongue, replied—'May it please your Highness, I have long courted that young gentlewoman there, my lady's-maid; and cannot prevail!—I was, therefore, humbly praying her ladyship to intercede for me!' Turning to the waiting-maid, Cromwell sternly inquired—'What is the meaning of this? Mr. White is my friend; and I expect that you will treat him accordingly.' The delighted waiting-maid, desired nothing more, dropped a low courtesy to the Protector, and said,—'If Mr. White intends me that honour, certainly I shall not refuse him.' 'Well,' rejoins Cromwell,—'Call Goodwin!—this business shall be completed before I leave the room.' Goodwin came: poor Jerry could not retreat: the marriage was solemnized: and the pious chaplain lived fifty years with the wife of his choice!" (Noble's Memoirs of the House of Cromwell, Vol. i. pp. 151, 152.)

We have repeated these facts respecting four of the chaplains of Cromwell, to teach our author, not only how indecorous it is in itself, but how dangerous it is to his own cause, to provoke retaliation by calling names.

But to return to our subject—We fear, that our author, in his coarse condemnation, includes not only such men as Usher and Sanderson, but all the apostles and primitive Christians! "To deny," he writes, "that there are seasons when a Christian may *piously* lift up his hand against the government of his country, would be to speak treason against the Constitution of England, which rests on the basis of the Revolution." (p. 53.) This language is incorrect. The Constitution of England does not rest on the basis of the Revolution;—but the Revolution, if Revolution be the right term, rested on the basis of the Constitution. James II. by the introduction of popery and despotism, wished to destroy the Constitution; but, by the bringing in of William III. the Constitution was preserved, and settled on its ancient

foundations; and ever since, it has been consolidated, strengthened, and improved.<sup>1</sup> We challenge our author to adduce a solitary instance of an apostle, or a primitive Christian "piously lifting up his hand against the government of his country!" We challenge him to produce from Scripture, a solitary warrant for such a "pious practice." "The duty of insurrection," so "sacred" in modern times to revolutionists and rebels, is, in our estimation, neither more doubtful, nor more dangerous, than "the piety of Christians lifting up their hands against the government of their country." (p. 53.)

2. *The argumentation of the work is sophistical and defective.* "Principles" and "Reasons," (pp. 14, 15.) "Doctrine and Discipline" (p. 13, *note.*) "A Church." and "The Church;" (p. 34, 38, &c. &c.) communion with a particular Church, and communion with the Church universal; being confounded in his own mind, continually intermingle with his reasoning, and vitiate his argument.—"On the mode of electing ministers to their office," says he "the Scripture is sufficiently explicit, to justify the practice of those denominations who appeal to the suffrages of the people. Even the election of a new apostle was made by the brethren, and not by the ministers exclusively. (Acts i. 21—26.) The deacons were chosen by the same persons (Acts vi.) The decrees of the council at Jerusalem were passed also by them, and went forth with their name: <sup>2</sup> (Acts xv. 23.)

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<sup>1</sup> Written A. D. 1825.

<sup>2</sup> We cannot suffer these references to the Acts of the Apostles to pass unnoticed. We advert, first, to *inaccuracy of language.* In the reference to Acts i. "The election of an apostle" is said to be "*by the brethren, and not by the ministers exclusively:*" that is by the brethren, *and* the ministers. In the reference to Acts vi. "The deacons," it is affirmed, "*were chosen by the same persons:*" that is, according to grammar, but contrary to fact, *by the ministers and brethren.* In the reference to Acts xv. "The de-

From hence *we infer*, that although *no case occurs in the inspired history* where it is mentioned, (or testified,) that a Church elected its own pastor, yet it so entirely accords with the practice of the Church in other respects, that an exception in this particular, would have been a singular anomaly which nothing could justify, but the plainest and most express provision. The decisions of reason harmonize on this subject with the testimony of revelation." (pp. 11, 12.)

Let us examine this specimen of reasoning.—First;

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cree of the Council of Jerusalem," it is asserted, "was passed by *them*;" that is according to grammar, but contrary to insinuation, *by the brethren and the ministers*. For our author, in his second reference, insinuates that the agents, in all these transactions, were *the brethren alone*. We advert, secondly, *To mis-statement of facts*. "The election of an apostle was by the ministers, and the brethren." It was by *neither*; but by *God Himself*. 'Thou, Lord, shew whether of the two *Thou* hast chosen.' (Acts i. 24.) The choice of seven holy men, to an office merely worldly and temporary, "was not by the ministers, *and* brethren, but by the *brethren alone*." "Paul and Barnabas went up to Jerusalem unto the apostles *and* elders—about the question of circumcision." (Acts xv. 2.) The apostles and elders came *together* to consider of this matter. (Acts xv. 6.) And the decree was passed, not as our author intimates, by the *brethren alone*, but by the apostles and elders *together*! We advert, lastly, *to incoherency of inference*. First, God chose an *apostle* in the place of Judas. Secondly, *The people alone* chose seven holy men to a *worldly* office. Thirdly, *The apostles and elders and brethren* sent out a decree to regulate the conduct of the Christian *converts*. "From hence," says our author, "we infer, that the PEOPLE ALONE have a right to *elect their own minister*." (!!!) "But is this logic? Ay, marry is't.—Give me leave: here lies the water; good: here stands the man; good: if the man goes to the water, and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes: mark you that: but if the water comes to him, and drown him, he drowns not himself. ARGAL; he that is not guilty of his own death, shortens not his own life!"

HAMLET.



it is *asserted*, that scripture is sufficiently explicit, to justify the election of ministers by popular suffrage.— Secondly; it is *admitted* that no case occurs in Scripture “of a Church electing its own Pastor!” Thirdly; it is *confessed*, that unless a Church has the power to elect its own pastor, nothing but the plainest and most express provision can justify the singular anomaly.— Now, we ask—*Where* is this most plain and express provision made in the Holy Scriptures? It is *not* made: and, therefore, on his own admission, our author not only contradicts himself, but leads us to the unhallowed conclusion, that “Scripture is not sufficiently explicit!” But “the decisions of reason harmonize on this subject, with the testimony of Revelation.” Harmonize with a testimony never given! Harmonize with a nonentity! For our author admits that “no case” of the kind “occurs in the inspired history;” (p. 12.) and that, “Scripture is silent on the subject.”

To assert “that nothing can justify scripture,” but an interpretation suitable to our purpose, or congenial to our opinions, is a mode of speaking which “nothing can justify,” and which we utterly condemn. If this mode of speaking is not impious, it is presumptuous; if it is not a setting up of our own wisdom above the wisdom of God, it *does* betray an overweening conceit of the powers of our own understandings. It shews, that prejudice warps our own minds; and it may lead others to wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction.

“The principles of Dissenters are the all-sufficiency of the Scriptures as a rule of faith and practice, in matters of religion;—The *consequent denial* of the right of legislatures to impose any rites, ceremonies, &c.”—This is a complete non sequitur; for the “consequent denial” should have been, not of the right to impose *indifferent things*; but the right to impose anything *in faith or practice contrary to the Scriptures!*

“A passage of Scripture, (1 Cor. iii. 12—15,) appears to me to be generally misunderstood—‘Now if any man

build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble ; every man's work shall be made manifest, &c.' It has been usual to interpret this passage in reference to *doctrines*, but the true view of it would refer it to *persons*. The *materials* laid by different preachers, are not the *sentiments* which they preach, but the *members* which they add to the Church." (p. 194.) We wonder that our author should venture this new interpretation, when he had lately quoted the *old* and solid exposition of the Rev. Robert Hall. "The evil to be deplored," says this eloquent writer, "in the present state of the Church, is the unnatural distance at which Christians stand at each other ; the spirit of sects ; the disposition to found their union on the "wood, hay, stubble" of human inventions, or disputable tenets ; instead of the eternal rock, the 'faith once delivered to the saints.'" (p. 124.)

We will give another of our author's expositions of Scripture : 'Let every soul be subject to the higher powers ; for there is no power but of God ; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God ; and they that resist, shall receive unto themselves damnation.' (Rom. xiii. 1, 2.) "This injunction," says our author, "must, of course, be understood as relating to matters purely civil ; or, in other words, to those laws, which are not in opposition to the spirit and the letter of divine revelation. If rulers enjoin anything which is condemned by the word of truth, it is the duty of a Christian, at all hazards, and without hesitation, to act upon the principles, and to follow the example of the apostle, and to obey God rather than man." (p. 52, 53.) What a comment on the words 'Let every soul be subject to the higher powers !' But let us analyze this memorable exposition,—'Let every soul,' &c. "This injunction must of course"—nay : *not* "*of course* ;" for this would be neither an argument nor an explanation, but a sheer "*petitio principii*," a bold begging of the

question. "This injunction *must relate to matters purely civil*; or, in *other words*, to those laws which are not in opposition to divine revelation."—The author here dexterously leads us to believe, that "matters purely civil," and "*laws not in opposition to divine revelation*," are precisely the same things! But we contend that "laws not in opposition to divine revelation" "may be not purely *civil*," but altogether *religious* laws. And if this be admitted, then our author, on his own shewing, must confess, that the injunction of the apostle must *not* be understood as "*relating only to matters purely civil*," but as referring *also*, to laws purely religious!!—Our author leads us still further from the meaning of the apostle, by *supposing* rulers to "enjoin what is condemned by the word of God;" and then jumps with extacy to his conclusion, that "We must obey God, rather than man." This conclusion every churchman devoutly believes; but it is a conclusion which no churchman would have drawn from the words—'Let every soul be subject to the higher powers!'—Our author's *first* position is—"Matters purely civil:"—his *second*—"Laws not in opposition to revelation:"—his *third*—"Things condemned by the word of truth." On these three positions, which are *utterly dissimilar*, he argues as if they were *perfectly identical*; and then draws a conclusion, quite foreign from the meaning of the apostle! 'Let every soul,' writes St. Paul, 'be subject to the higher powers;' that is, Mr. James explains, "We must obey God rather than man!"

"A man may be a sincere believer of the gospel, and, as far as respects his own private conduct, an *exemplary example* of genuine piety; but until he has connected himself with a Christian Church, he has not professed himself to be a Christian." (p. 26.) "The very day on which a man professed himself a Christian he was added to the Church. In fact, his joining himself to the Church was his profession." (p. 189.) In the former of these two passages, nothing, if we understand our author, is a

profession of Christianity but a receiving of the Lord's Supper. In the latter, an attendance on divine worship is a profession of Christianity. But we are unable, either to reconcile these passages with each other, or with the Scriptures. We cannot conceive how a man can be a "sincere believer of the gospel," and an "exemplary pattern of genuine piety," without being a Christian. Nor can we admit that every man is "added to the Church on the very day that he professed himself a Christian."

Sometimes our author seems to insinuate more than he ventures to express. It is insinuated (p. 4) that the Church of England acknowledges *another* rule of faith and practice *than the word of God*; and that she "founds a right to spiritual privileges upon *legislative enactments*; and views the *whole* of religion as a *matter of custom*." Again: he writes (p. 241) "*That uniformity which is produced by legislative enactments is far more fatal to the interests of piety than the occasional disturbances of those churches which are formed on the ground of voluntary consent. The occasional storm is less mischievous in its effects than the stagnant AND quiescent atmosphere, which settles in the form of pestilence on the face of the earth.*" Of these varied and severe insinuations we stop not to conjecture the motive or the object; but we *do*, somewhat indignantly, ask, Where is the *modesty* of making the Church of England contradict one of her Articles? (Art. 6.) Where is the *truth* of telling the world, that the Church of England "views the whole of religion as a matter of custom?" And where is the *candour* of describing the uniformity of the Church of England, as "a pestilence, settling on the face of the earth?"

3. *The style of the work is extremely redundant and incongruously metaphorical.* We have already noticed some of its "vain repetitions," and shall not burden our pages with any more specimens. We only remark, generally, that such is its careless and tautologous lan-

guage, that its size might easily be reduced one third, or one half, without the loss of a single idea ; and this reduction would be advantageous both to the book and to its purchasers.

Sometimes the language of our author is *odd*: "A *seur*, ill-natured Christian, if I may designate him by a resemblance as fabulous as that of the Centaur, is like a lamb with a dog's head ; a dove with a vulture's beak ; a rose with leaves of nettles." (p. 50.) "The beautiful subordination of a dissenting Church," (p. 30.) where, according to our author, *all are equal*, is an unfit expression. We should have said, "the beautiful *level* of dissenting churches."

Sometimes his language is *not sufficiently dignified*. "Other members give more *for the sugar that sweetens their tea*, than they do for all the advantages of public worship." (p. 79.) Sometimes his language is *unintelligible*. "With respect to all human authority our power is legislative ; but in reference to Christ purely executive." (p. 184.) Sometimes his language is even *absurd*. "The authority of Pastors is not legislative or coercive, but simply declaratory or executive." (p. 59.) "Not *coercive* but simply *executive* ;" that is, when a man has been hanged he has not been coerced, but "*simply executed* !"

Our author, it will be seen, is very fond of metaphors ; but, unhappily, whenever he mounts a metaphor, he rides without a bridle, and cares not whither his steed may carry him. And, as this metaphorical style is very fascinating to young authors, to young preachers, to young students, and to young hearers, and may be as dangerous as it is fascinating, our readers will forgive us, if, for the sake of the persons to whom we have just alluded, we analyze a *few* of the metaphors in the work now before us.<sup>1</sup> Some of his metaphors are *incongruous*.

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<sup>1</sup> We were exceedingly amused with the long extract, which our author makes from a long sermon preached before the Long

"In its collective capacity a Church *concentrates*, as in a *focus*, (centre!) the light and love, that exists in her individual members. Without being combined in a visible union, its *SPLENDOUR* would be only the dim and scattered light, which was *diffused* over chaos at the twilight of creation; while," &c. (p. 27.) The introduction of the word "*splendour*" renders the passage ridiculous. Who ever heard of the "*SPLENDOUR*" of *dim light*, "*scattered*" and "*diffused over chaos at the twilight of creation*?"

"Usages and customs that are venerable for their antiquity, I admit, should not be touched by men of hot spirits, and rude hands; lest in removing the sediment, deposited by the stream of time, at the base of a fabric; they should touch the foundation itself; but where the word of God is the line and plummet; where the line is

Parliament, in 1647. "O divine love! The sweet harmony of souls! The music of angels! The joy of God's own heart! The very darling of his bosom! The source of true happiness! The pure quintessence of heaven! That which reconciles the jarring principles of the world, and makes them chime together: that which melts men's hearts into one another!" (p. 18.) Divine love is here, first, a most wonderful *thing*,—it is "*harmony*,"—"music,"—"joy,"—"a source,"—"a darling,"—"a quintessence;" but, before you are aware, it becomes a wonderful *person*,—"a reconciler of principles,"—"a chimer of bells,"—and "a melter of metals!" Again: "The *golden beams* of truth, and the silken cords of love, *twisted* together, will draw all men with a sweet violence!" (p. 19.) "Golden beams of truth, and silken cords of love," are allowable, as *separate* metaphors; but the "*twisting*" of them together, is like the twisting together of silk and of sunshine! "If we keep the *fire* of zeal within the *chimney*, it never doth any hurt; but if we let it break out, and catch hold of the *thatch* of our flesh, and kindle our corrupt nature, and set the *house of our body* on fire, it is no longer zeal," &c. (p. 20.) Such language as this is calculated to render religious subjects disgusting to persons of taste and education.

held by the hand of caution, and watched by the eye of wisdom, in such cases, (what cases?) innovation upon the customs of our churches is a blessing." (p. 73.) In this passage, the metaphorical *stream of time* is converted into a stream of water; but instead of washing away the foundation against which it beats, it deposits a "sediment;" and the removal of this "sediment" (or of this abuse) is an "innovation." Our author meant not to assert, that the removal of an abuse is an innovation; but this is the import of his figurative language. "The hand of caution," and "the eye of wisdom," should, on all occasions, be employed; but the "line," and the "plummet," however useful in building a palace, or a temple, are not necessary in removing "a sediment,"—that is a heap of mud!

"Home scenes, according as they are lovely or repulsive, form a beauteous halo round, or dark spots upon the orb of public character." (p. 137.) We cannot comprehend, how "*home scenes*," can form a "*halo*" at all; but to make "*home*" (or *private*) "*scenes*," "form a halo round the orb of public character," is inclosing a greater "orb" within a less; or making the centre go round the circumference!!

"It is to servants that the solemn and striking admonition is addressed, 'To adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.' Even the sublime doctrine of a redeeming God,—that bright effulgence which has issued from the fountain of light, is susceptible of decoration, from the consistent conduct of a Christian servant." (p. 161.) The word "adorn" is beautifully *figurative*; but our author makes it *literal*; and then talks of *decoration* for the bright effulgence from the fountain of light!" This is like hanging a "decoration" of silk ribbons on the rainbow,—or suspending glass lustres on the sun!

"Instead of acting as a *skreen* to prevent petty vexations from reaching his ear, they (wives?) have rendered their *tongues* a *conductor* to convey them to his bosom!"

(p. 139.) The confusion of metaphors, in this short passage, is multiplied and incurable. Did our author mean to say—Instead of acting as a *skreen* to hide petty vexations from his *view*; the wife has become a *mirror* to reflect them in his *sight*?

“The minister’s wife should never *appear* (never *be*?) fond of receiving ill reports from others. If she have a taste of this kind, gratification enough will be found her. Like a *queen-bee* she has no need to roam abroad in quest of honey. She may sit at home, in indolent repose, while the whole hive of gossips and tattlers will collect for her an exuberant supply. Let her rather discourage these humming insects, and convince them, that she has neither ear for their buzz, nor taste for their honey.” (p. 141.)—Addison, in the 209th Spectator, translates, from a satire of Simonides, a description of ten sorts of wives. After describing *nine* sorts, by as many unfavourable comparisons, he compares the tenth, the only good one among them, to the “busy bee.” We know not whither we could better send the *wasplish* tribe of “gossips and tattlers” for reproof, than to the bee-hive; from which no member departs, but on expeditions of toil; to which every member returns laden with sweetness; in which every ardent little labourer hums its own tune, and minds its own business. Never was “the little busy bee” so abused before. Never before was the sweetness of honey compared to scandal. Never before was the delightful hum of these industrious little creatures resembled to the malignant whisperings of backbiters!—The *honey* of *slander*! A *hive* of *tattlers*! Slander is not the sweetness of the honeycomb, “but the poison of asps.” Backbiters form not a hive of bees, but a nest of hornets! “They should,” as our author justly states, “be avoided as the plague; they are mischief-makers, and quarrel-mongers, and the very pests of dissenting Churches!” (p. 102.) “Gossips and tattlers disturb our Churches.” (p. 112.) Yet he compares backbiters to a hive of bees; and honey to slander! The



hallowed language of Scripture should have preserved the sweetest production of nature from this profanation. "How sweet are Thy words unto my taste; yea sweeter than honey, or the honey-comb." (Psalm xix. 10. and cxix. 103.)

"On the troubled ocean of theological opinion,"—"our compass is the word of God! reason must be the steersman at the helm, to guide the vessel by the direction of the needle; and that mariner is accountable for the consequences, who is too ignorant or too indolent to examine his course." (p. 17.) In this passage, there is such a change of persons, and such a confusion of the figurative and the literal, that we can scarcely hope to discover its import. But did our author mean to say—"On the troubled ocean of theological opinion, the word of God must be our compass, reason must be our pilot, [*and Jesus Christ must be our polar star: but if we are too self-sufficient to pray for divine guidance*] or too indolent to examine our course, [*we shall never enter the haven of eternal rest?*]"

Some of our author's metaphors, to use an expression in Foster's Essays, are "cooked." "Both the congregation and the student are to blame: they in tempting him too soon from his college; and he in acceding to their wishes. They, however, are mostly to be censured; and, as far as their own conduct is concerned, are rightly punished, for *plucking from academic bowers that fruit, which, had it been permitted to hang till it was ripe, would have done them much service.*" (p. 242.) "Academic bowers," entirely a figure of speech, are here transformed into *orchards*; and "young students," certainly not figures of speech, are changed into "unripe fruit," which is plucked and eaten by hungry congregations! We wonder that the author did not pursue the metaphor, and find a resemblance for those commotions, which the eating of unripe fruit sometimes occasions.

Some of our author's metaphors are *beneath the dignity of his subject*. "All this is nothing else to the mere com-

fort-hunter, than the husk or the shell, which must be cracked and thrown away for the kernel of a little Christian experience." (p. 43.) "The presence of messengers from other Churches, at the annual meetings of our societies, produces a friendly feeling, not unlike that which a family experiences when gathered together *at a Christmas party*." (p. 132.) Again: "For any minister to be very desirous that people should come and hear the Gospel from *him*, instead of others, seems as unreasonable, as it would be for one of the *shopmen* in a *large shop*, to wish all the *customers* to come to his part of the counter. If *customers* come at all, and the *goods go off*, in so far as he feels an interest in the prosperity of the *shop*, he will rejoice." (p. 127.)

Lastly—Some of our author's metaphors are *indelicate, disgusting, and horrible*.—"Tattlers, to borrow a simile of Solomon's," (Solomon, we believe, has no such simile:) "resemble the fly, which neglects the healthful part of the frame, to pitch and luxuriate on the sore." (p. 113.) "Antinomianism is some monstrous reptile which unites the venom of the wasp, the deformity of the spider, and the *slime* of the snail." (p. 77.) "With insatiable appetite, they devour all the news they can by any means collect; and are never *easy*, until all is *disgorged* again, to the unspeakable annoyance of others around them." (p. 112.) "The man that takes a revengeful temper to his pillow, is inviting Satan to be his guest. Such a man would, probably, tremble at the thought of taking a harlot to his bed; but is it no crime to sleep in the embraces of a fiend?" (p. 108.) Horrible!

After this detailed scrutiny of the Literary Character of "Christian Fellowship," we are, in truth, concerned, but, in "justice," constrained to say, that its spirit is pompous and dogmatical; its argumentation sophistical and defective; its style rambling and redundant; its metaphors incorrect and incongruous.

Our author has *not always acknowledged his obligations to other writers*. We notice *only* an instance or two

"Church members of a gossiping and tatling (gossiping and tattling) disposition are like the grasshoppers (grashoppers) of the field; little, hopping, shrivelled insects, too insignificant to be noticed by any thing, but their noise; and who on that account, make the domain ring with their importunate chink." (James, pp. 112, 113.)

"Because half a dozen grasshoppers under a fern make the field ring with their importunate chink, while thousands of great cattle, reposed beneath the shadow of the British oak, chew the cud and are silent; pray do not imagine that those who make the noise are the only inhabitants of the field; or that, after all, they are any other than the little, shrivelled, meagre, hopping, —though loud and troublesome insects of the hour." (Burke on French Revolution, 8vo. Twelfth Edition, 1793.)

"They who have head-knowledge" ("where *should* knowledge be but in the head?") "dwell in the frigid zone of Christianity." (James, p. 42.)

"The frigid zone of Christianity was the region where Mrs. Barbauld, before she went so far north herself, placed the Socinians." (Fuller's Calvinistic and Socinian Systems compared. 12mo. p. 154.)

"Happier hours than those which have been there spent, we never expect to know in this world: they have left a relish and a fragrance upon the mind; the remembrance of them is sweet, and the anticipation of their return is amongst the brightest we have on this side the vail!" (James, p. 33.)

"Happier hours than those which have been spent on these meditations on the songs of Zion, he never expects to see in this world; very pleasantly did they pass, and moved smoothly and swiftly along: for when thus engaged he counted no time. They are gone; but have left a relish, and a fragrance upon the mind, and the remembrance of them is sweet." (Horne's Preface to his Commentary on the Psalms, p. lv.)

But we must close our lengthened remarks.—Very hard measure is, at the present time, meted out to our Church. She is beset with enemies, and assailed from every quarter.—She is spoken of with every kind of obloquy, attacked in every species of warfare, struck with every kind of weapon.—Her doctrines, ceremonies, liturgy, discipline, officers, patronage, revenues,—sometimes in turn, and sometimes together,—are incessantly and violently arraigned. We are friends to fair and liberal discussion;—but where is the liberality of magnifying the defects, and of exaggerating the abuses of the Establishment, while her nature is misrepresented, and her excellency is concealed? Where is the fairness of infusing into the minds of young and uninformed Dissenters, objections against the Church, which have been refuted a thousand times? To argue with men, who are so prejudiced as to see nothing but the defects of the Established Church, were as useless, as to argue with those, who can see nothing but spots in the sun!

While our Church has been thus vigorously and variously assaulted by her enemies, she has been tardily, partially, and inefficiently defended by her friends. Our protracted remarks on the *Work*, at the head of this Article, are due, not so much to its author, or its merits, as to our venerable Establishment, which in it is so covertly, and so severely accused. For who would suspect that in the midst of a book with the seductive Title of “*Christian Fellowship*,” a most unprovoked and unkind attack on our Church was concealed? With smiling countenance and fair speech, he invites us to a feast; and then spreads, as a banquet on his table, the mangled body of our venerable parent!—We highly esteem the conscientious Dissenter, who fairly announces the principles of Dissent, and openly states his objections against the Church of England. But it is a severe trial of Christian temper, when our Church is caricatured, and then held up to ridicule;—calumniated and then

condemned!—Such conduct is like the proceeding of the Inquisition, which disfigured its victims, and then led them out, as spectacles of mockery and derision!—Or, it is like the cruelty of Nero, who dressed up the innocent Christians, to resemble wild beasts, and then “let slip” his blood-hounds to devour them!

If our author chooses in future to attack our Church, let him do it openly, that when we see his Title Page, we may know what we are about to purchase, and what we are about to read. But let him not write “The Balm of Gilead,” on a “Vial of Discord;” nor inscribe “Christian Fellowship,” on the “Box of Pandora.” We see as clearly, and lament as deeply as our author, the abuses of the Church of England. But there are in Dissenting Churches, as he has honestly told us, abuses great, and constant, and manifold!—There is, however, this essential difference between the abuses of Dissent, and the abuses of the Established Church:—the abuses of the Church are *extraneous* to the Establishment; but the abuses of Dissent are *inherent* in the system.

We are grateful to our author, that he has disclosed, for the first time, in something like official form, the defects, distractions, and abuses of Dissent. This faithful and fearless disclosure, so creditable to his sincerity and independence, will be, we trust, advantageous both to the well-informed Churchman, and to the conscientious Dissenter. The well-informed Churchman will learn from “The Picture of Dissent,” which our author has so faithfully drawn, more highly to prize, and more dearly to love, the Church of England;—and the conscientious Dissenter, while from the same “Picture” he learns to be more candid towards the faults of the Establishment, will begin to supply the defects, and to lessen the abuses of Dissent. In both these ways, our author’s book will, we hope, be highly useful. But while it will be useful to well-informed Churchmen and conscientious Dissenters;—it will, we fear, be injurious to bigoted Dissenters, and uninformed

**Churchmen.** Uninformed Churchmen will not easily believe, that a man of candour and piety could, without cause, like our author, bring such severe and cool charges against the Establishment. Bigoted Dissenters, if such there be, will, with his charges, quote his candour and his piety, to make proselytes of others, or to confirm their own prejudices.—Both these effects, whether designed, or otherwise, are to be expected ;—though much to be deprecated and deplored.

Personally, we thank our author for his book ; because the apparent candour and real confidence, in which he has made his attack, have induced us again to examine the foundations of our Church, and the examination has confirmed our former convictions of her scriptural nature, and practical excellency. She has nothing to fear, either from the attacks of her enemies, or from comparison with any Church under heaven.—At home, she is the bulwark of sound doctrines, and the sanctuary of scriptural piety ;—abroad, she is the wonder and glory of Christendom :—she is destined, we hope, to be the teacher and benefactress of the world. We revere her biblical constitution ; we admire her tolerant spirit ; we rejoice in her holy influence,—and we pray that her influence may be increased a thousand-fold ! We petition heaven for her peace, and will labour for her prosperity. “ O pray for the peace of Jerusalem ; they shall prosper that love thee ! Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces ! For my brethren and companions’ sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee ! Because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good.” (Psalm cxxii.)

THE END.

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